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Transcript

FirstNet Special Board Meeting, March 28, 2017

COORDINATOR: Welcome and thank you for standing by. At this time, all participants are in a listen-only mode for the duration of today's call. I would also like to inform participants today's conference is being recorded. If you have any objections, you may disconnect at this time. I would now like to turn the meeting over to your host for today's call. Ma'am, you may begin.

SUE SWENSON: Thank you very much, operator, and I want to welcome everybody who's in person today at the Commerce Auditorium and those who are listening in today. This is a very, very special day. Special meeting of the Board March the 28th and this really marks the completion of a significant milestone on our strategic roadmap. I think all of you recall that we laid out this roadmap in 2014 and we have marched along that roadmap and delivered on every commitment that we've made. But this one in particular, I think, is pretty significant. And I have to tell you going back to when the project first started, you know, everybody told me that we would never reach this day. They said we have no idea how you're going to get from Point A to this particular point. We still, obviously, have quite a bit of work to do, but this is a significant day in terms of moving us towards that.

This also represents a lot of work by a lot of people. And there's no way that I would have enough time to thank everyone who's been involved in this going back to actually lobbying for the legislation to get this project started. The people in the early days of FirstNet, I remember our first meeting, kind of an informal meeting with the Board, prior to us having an official meeting just to get acclimated in Boulder. Jeff Bratcher and I were actually talking about that the other day and he was in that room and said, you know, it, kind of, brought back memories, you know, that very first session.

We actually have had a Board meeting in this particular room. So there's a lot of memories, a lot of challenges along the way, but I want to thank each and every one of you who are in the audience today listening for everything that you've done both individually and collectively. Because this could not be done without everybody doing what they've done. And I can't thank you enough. I won't be able to thank everybody today because we don't have enough time, but I hope in the coming months I have the opportunity to thank each and every one of you for

everything that you've done. Because this is a milestone moment. This is really a significant day, and so I hope to be able to thank all of you.

We have a fairly focused meeting today. We're going to complete a review of the NPSBN. I never did like that acronym. I think it's Nationwide Public Safety Broadband Network. And as we acquisition and approach the RFP process, Jason Karp, our general counsel, will provide a brief litigation closeout. I think all of you are aware of the litigation that was closed out on March the 17th on St. Patrick's Day. And then we will move to Resolution 84, which is the approval to finalize the Nationwide Public Safety Broadband Network award. And so that's really the agenda for today. And like I said, a very important milestone day and I know for a lot of you, this is a moment that it almost feels surreal. I told people before the meeting today it almost feels surreal to me. You, kind of, dream about it and hope for it, but to actually be here today is significant. And I want to thank all of you for everything you've done to get here today. So with that, Madam Secretary, would you do the conflicts of interest statement?

KAREN MILLER-KUWANA: Yes, and I apologize. I will read quickly. In advance of today's special Board meeting, the management team has provided the Board members with an agenda outlining each of the items that will be discussed and decided during today's meeting. The members were also provided with a conflicts of interest assessment, which was produced jointly by the Commerce Department, Office of General Counsel and FirstNet's Office of Chief Counsel. Providing these documents in advance to the Board members allows them to identify potential conflicts of interest and to recuse themselves from participation if required. We will, prior to this special Board meeting, remind all Board members of their obligations relating to conflict of interest and ask them to identify whether any recusals from deliberations or voting are necessary.

In consideration of this special meeting today, each member should consider his or her obligations with respect to the appropriate committee and for some of you that might mean more than one. Just to be clear, we are only doing one conflict notification for this special Board meeting. With that said, any Board member believes that they must now recuse themselves, please so state for the record. Hearing none, we are ready to proceed, Madam Chair.

SUE SWENSON: Great, thank you. Would you please take the role?

KAREN MILLER-KUWANA: Yes. Sue Swenson?

SUE SWENSON: Here.

KAREN MILLER-KUWANA: Jeff Johnson?

JEFF JOHNSON: Here.

KAREN MILLER-KUWANA: Christopher Burbank?

CHRISTOPHER BURBANK: Here.

KAREN MILLER-KUWANA: Neil Cox?

NEIL COX: Here.

KAREN MILLER-KUWANA: James Douglas?

GOVERNOR JAMES DOUGLAS: Here.

KAREN MILLER-KUWANA: Ed Horowitz?

EDWARD HOROWITZ: Here.

KAREN MILLER-KUWANA: Kevin McGinnis?

KEVIN MCGINNIS: Here.

KAREN MILLER-KUWANA: Annise Parker?

ANNISE PARKER: Here.

KAREN MILLER-KUWANA: Ed Reynolds?

ED REYNOLDS: Here.

KAREN MILLER-KUWANA: Richard Stanek?

RICHARD STANEK: Here.

KAREN MILLER-KUWANA: Teri Takai?

TERI TAKAI: Here.

KAREN MILLER-KUWANA: Kathy Kraninger?

KATHY KRANINGER: Here.

KAREN MILLER-KUWANA: David Hess? Christopher Piehota?

CHRISTOPHER PIEHOTA: Here.

KAREN MILLER-KUWANA: Thank you. Madam Chair, we have a quorum.

SUE SWENSON: Thank you very much. Jason I think you have a very brief update. I think a lot of people were well aware of the outcome of the litigation. But for those who haven't, just a brief update for everybody would be appreciated.

JASON KARP: All right, can everybody hear me? Yes, thanks. Thank you, Madam Chair, and just, you know, I'm very, certainly, pleased to, kind of, highlight that the protest litigation has been resolved. As you all know, we've been operating under protest for the last several months.

Just to give a little bit of context now that we're closing it out so folks, kind of, understand the scope of the protest and what it was really about. The evaluation team as we stated in the RFP, evaluated the various proposals on a number of different items including both the business solutions offered up as well as the technical and financial solutions offered up by the offers. The Federal Acquisition Regulations allow as part of that process to source selection authority to essentially down select. They call it a competitive range where they only maintain within consideration those offers that are mostly highly rated. And as part of that process, one of the offers, Rivada Mercury, was eliminated from the process. And they thereafter filed what they call a pre-award protest. Obviously, we had not awarded the contract. But they are able to go ahead and file a protest that the United States Court of Federal Claims.

After a full deliberation on the merits of that case, I'm very happy to report that as of March 17th, as our Chair noted, the Court of Federal Claims found unequivocally that the government had acted reasonably and appropriately in all circumstances related to the claims that were raised. And dismissed Rivada Mercury's motion in total and granted the government's motion for judgement on the record. This really is a momentous event in that it clears the last hurdle for this award and for FirstNet to move forward to complete the procurement. There are no longer any legal impediments that would impact our ability to move forward in that regard. So really a very positive outcome across the board. And we're very happy to have that behind us.

If I may, I just wanted to thank a couple of people. I don't want to take a lot of time. But it really was a momentous event and took a lot of time and effort of many staff members. I wanted to thank in particular the Department of Justice. Jessica Toplin, who was the lead counsel there, did a phenomenal job getting up to speed on very complicated issues. Certainly our counsel and contracting officer at the Department of Interior, our acquisition partner. The support that we received from the Department of Commerce, Contract Law Division has been very supportive of us. And then certainly and not least of all, but really critical the staff, the evaluation team, at FirstNet, James Mitchell in particular, who was the program manager overseeing the acquisition, and I'm going to throw a prop out to my deputy, Paul Madison, who just worked tirelessly with James. He really helped formulate the strategy and the case with our counsel and it really paid off dividends.

And we don't say this because we're so happy we won, but because this is a win for public safety and what we're doing here today. So really, really proud of that and with that, I hope this will be the last litigation update I have to provide.

SUE SWENSON: I hope so as well. I agree with Jason's comments. It took a lot of work on a lot of people's part to have that happen and I appreciate you giving kudos to Jessica out of the Department of Justice because she's the one who had to represent us in court. It was a lot of work on the part of a lot of people that she was the one who actually had to present. So we really appreciate her efforts on behalf of public safety.

You know, we've done a lot to get to today. You know, we've gone as Jason said and Mike has talked about it. We've done a fair and extensive comprehensive evaluation process in actually following the Federal Acquisition Rules to do that. So we followed all those rules and it's paid off. I think the advice we got to do that was actually quite wise.

In June, we started becoming operational in anticipation of this, not knowing how that, of course, would come out. We said boy, we better start getting ready to actually do this. So in June last year, we actually established the Office of the Chief Customer Officer. Rich Reed, of course, is our Chief Customer Officer. Very important as we execute our state plans and go out and talk to public safety in terms of adoption. You know, need to change into that operational mode. And we also established the Network Program Office, which is obviously very important for execution of this contract. You can't even imagine, you know, the details that have to be involved in executing a program of this magnitude. So that office was established.

As you know, we approved a budget for FY '17 in anticipation of being able to award a contract, including the obligations of the \$6.5 billion to support the contract. So that was an important milestone that we accomplished.

At the December meeting, we announced the readiness for the partnership and TJ, excuse me, announced a 100-day plan. You hear people talk about a 100-day plan, but there's a lot that has to happen in that 100 days and it would take us hours to go through the details of that 100-day plan. But I can assure you that we have, and I can tell you that the organization is ready for that execution. And then we also continued to work on all aspects of the procurement short of the award so that we could move forward with the deployment and the execution of the contract.

So today, we're at an important step, the Board having completed its work including all the necessary reviews and due diligence related to the acquisition. We are going to vote on a resolution to authorize Mike Poth, our CEO, to finalize the award for the contract and initial task orders in accordance with the recommendations of the source selection authority. So obviously, a significant amount of work has preceded this. This is a significant milestone. I just wanted to make sure that you all knew what preceded this in order to put us in a position to actually execute this today. To not have not done that work and to be able to execute a contract and start today would have been irresponsible, frankly, on the part of the FirstNet Board and FirstNet management. So I want to assure you that they are more than ready and more than anxious to get started on this.

In light of the significance of this vote, as you know, we normally take just a voice vote for a resolution. But today, because of its significance and historic value, I really feel it's appropriate

that we take a voice vote on behalf of each of the Board members on the resolution. The Board members have material in advance of the meeting. And have the resolution in front of them, but I'd like the Secretary to read the operative language of the resolution and then we will call for a voice vote for each of the Board members.

KAREN MILLER-KUWANA: Now be it resolved, that the Board has completed an appropriate review of the NPSBN acquisition approach and request for proposal process, consistent with the requirements of the Act, and hereby authorizes the CEO or his or her delegates to finalize the award of the NPSBN contract and initial task orders in accordance with the recommendation of the source selection authority.

SUE SWENSON: Thank you, Madam Secretary. I would entertain a motion to move that resolution.

WOMAN: So moved.

SUE SWENSON: Thank you.

MAN: I'd invite Kevin McGinnis to second that.

SUE SWENSON: Okay.

KEVIN MCGINNIS: I would happily second that.

SUE SWENSON: Okay, great. Open for discussion. Any comments about the resolution?

KATHY KRANINGER: I have a couple of comments. I want to congratulate the Board for all the effort it took to get to this place and where we are today. And an important mission that FirstNet has to deliver on behalf of public safety of this country and we have a lot of work ahead of us as well. You know, from that standpoint I did want to say on behalf of the Federal Board members that we remain very focused on making sure that we deliver a solution to public safety while actually delivering a robust cybersecurity solution as part of FirstNet. The cybersecurity is a key risk in the future deployment of FirstNet and is something that we want to ensure that as we move forward that we are working closely with the Department of Commerce CIO and that we're ensuring that the National Public Safety Broadband Network complies with all federal statutes that move forward including FISMA, which I know is going to be an ongoing conversation. But (unintelligible).

SUE SWENSON: Thank you for that comment. Any other comments by the Board members? I can assure you that we've been dealing with that topic through the RFP process and through, as you know, many conversations. So I appreciate your comments and I can assure you that we're committed to being focused on those particular topics. Are we ready for a vote?

KAREN MILLER-KUWANA: We are. I will call each individual name and answer if you are in favor of the resolution with aye. If opposed say, nay. Beginning with our Madam Chair, Sue Swenson?

SUE SWENSON: Happily, yay.

KAREN MILLER-KUWANA: Vice Chair Jeff Johnson?

JEFF JOHNSON: Yay.

KAREN MILLER-KUWANA: Christopher Burbank?

CHRISTOPHER BURBANK: Aye.

KAREN MILLER-KUWANA: Neil Cox?

NEIL COX: Aye.

KAREN MILLER-KUWANA: James Douglas?

GOVERNOR JAMES DOUGLAS: Aye.

KAREN MILLER-KUWANA: Ed Horowitz?

EDWARD HOROWITZ: Aye.

KAREN MILLER-KUWANA: Kevin McGinnis?

KEVIN MCGINNIS: Aye.

KAREN MILLER-KUWANA: Annise Parker?

ANNISE PARKER: Aye.

KAREN MILLER-KUWANA: Ed Reynolds?

ED REYNOLDS: Aye.

KAREN MILLER-KUWANA: Richard Stanek?

RICHARD STANEK: Aye.

KAREN MILLER-KUWANA: Teri Takai?

TERI TAKAI: Aye.

KAREN MILLER-KUWANA: Kathy Kraninger?

KATHY KRANINGER: Aye.

KAREN MILLER-KUWANA: David Hess is not here, but we will see if he would like to amend his vote for this Board meeting.

DAVID HESS: I'm online, so.

KAREN MILLER-KUWANA: Apologies David. I'm sorry. Would you like to? David Hess?

DAVID HESS: Aye.

KAREN MILLER-KUWANA: Thank you, so amended. Christopher Piehota?

CHRISTOPHER PIEHOTA: Aye.

KAREN MILLER-KUWANA: Thank you. Madam Chair, the resolution has passed.

SUE SWENSON: I'm very excited. Thank you very much for the support of the Board and for public safety and I would like to give an opportunity for the Board members to make any comments about this particular resolution. And

MIKE POTH: Can I break protocol? How about a little?

(Applause)

SUE SWENSON: Oh, okay. You're free to break protocol.

MIKE POTH: I do it every day.

SUE SWENSON: Yes, I know exactly. What would be different about that? So any comments from the Board members? I'm sure there's a few comments, particularly those who've been on the Board since its inception and those who have joined before. So anybody interested in commenting about today's resolution and anything about the FirstNet project? I'm sure Chief Johnson has something to say.

JEFF JOHNSON: You know, I do. I don't think anyone could have possibly said it better when Sue thanked everyone in the audience for your contribution. The fact is that you're here because you know of this project and you know of its importance. And you probably gave up a pretty substantial part of your personal life or professional life to help make this happen. Sometimes that was giving us news we didn't want to hear. I know I was not very interested in hearing early

on that the procurement process would take two to three years. It didn't seem possible to me. It turned out absolutely to be factual. So for those people that gave us advice that I wasn't very anxious to hear, I apologize for my attitude. And I thank you for working with me and working with us and educating us. Getting us to a place where we finally understood the parameters that we operate in and found a path to execution.

I also just- I can't name the individuals, but I do want to reflect in the various phases, there was the pre-FirstNet. The Pre-D Block phase, an investment made by Harlin McEwen, Kevin McGinnis and many others that sat on the PSST. I'm hopeful that Harlin will talk about Morgan O'Brien's history and role and a vision that became FirstNet eventually. And then in the D Block phase, the public safety spectrum trust and the work of APCO and their leadership and its leadership and folks like Chris Moore and Chuck Dowd. Folks that weren't able to be here today, but certain contributed Dick Mergon and many others. But that was the D Block phase and the legislative phase.

You know, we all face times where we think it isn't going to work out and it works out differently than you thought. But I do have to reflect in the about ten years I've been involved, there have been many times where it's been very discouraging. But I never felt we couldn't do it. And it's- I guess it's good to be where we're at.

I think also someone said to me after the law passed, someone said I don't know if you guys knew this but what you just did was impossible. And I would say in retrospect if we would have known how impossible it was, we wouldn't have tried it. I think the only thing we had going for us was we're a bunch of hard headed public safety people that don't take no for an answer very well, which is why you never want your daughter dating a public safety person. But we don't take no very well and we don't quite very easy. And when public safety and the purpose of public safety are at heart, you can't stop. But I do reflect, it really was impossible. And we just didn't know it.

And I think the last thing is that, you know, just kind of, this whole notion that we didn't have a shot unless we got in the game. And the fact that we got in the game, what is it eight years after the smart phone came out? It's easy to reflect on the time in public safety in my career, 1978, to reflect on a time when public safety had something the public didn't. And that was the ability to go down the road and communicate. And somewhere along that path 14-year-old kids beat us. And FirstNet will reset that standard and bring to public safety a world class network of public safety, by public safety, for public safety. And bring us applications and technology and performance the likes of which public safety has never seen.

Today marks a lot of things, but today guarantees one thing, Madam Chair. And that's that we're not Second Net. FirstNet will execute on its contract and there's many people who I'll reach out to later and thank specifically, but we couldn't be here without you Madam Chair. Thank you.

SUE SWENSON: People on the phone have an opportunity as well.

CHRISTOPHER BURBANK: If I may very briefly, as I came on this Board three years ago and represents, as Jeff said, about ten years of the major city chiefs, my participation. There was a great deal of discussion about safeguarding or protecting public safety's interest. And one of the things that I've learned over the past three years is that the interest to public safety is very much alive and well in the hands of this Board. And especially those that represent industry because time and time again, they have looked out for our well-being and I sincerely appreciate it. And this is just a tremendous point and I am honored to be a part of this Board and to participate and to be here for the announcement today. Thank you very much.

SUE SWENSON: On the phone, oh go ahead Rich. Why don't you go first? And then we'll get on the phone and see if there's anybody on the phone.

RICHARD STANEK: Thank you, Madam Chair and members. I just want to take a minute and recognize some people who are in the audience today and then a couple quick comments. First off, Chief Tom Manger on behalf of Major City Chiefs, Laura Cooper on behalf of the Major County Sheriff's Association, (Unintelligible) Nelson on behalf of the National Sheriff's Association. Last night I had a chance to speak with Vince Talucci and Chief Don DeLucca on behalf of IACP. They're not able to make it here today. But they're here in spirit and full support.

And I would just say, you know, after 33 years in law enforcement like many of the folks up here serving in public safety whether police, fire, EMS, I'm very proud to be a member of this Board. I represent a county of over 1.3 million residents, 45 different cities, very decentralized. We represent amongst these four organizations over 800,000 men and women who proudly serve America's law enforcement. We waited a long time for this day to come. It is not a little thing by any means. We use this day in and day out whether responding to a simple crash as it may be out on one of the highways or a catastrophic fire or a robbery in progress. Whatever it might be, we need FirstNet and its ability to provide their broadband public safety network for what it is that we do day in and day out. On behalf of the residents of our cities, our counties, our communities across the country, thank you very much, Madam Chair.

SUE SWENSON: Thank you. Kevin McGinnis or Mayor Parker or Ed Reynolds, any comments from your side?

KEVIN MCGINNIS: Sure, this is Kevin. Thank you, Madam Chairman and thank you for your service to this Board. I think that of anyone who has really lit the light and led the rest of us over the past few years, it's you. And I thank you for that. This has been a long road from 2006, 2008 to where we are today. And I won't belabor that. I think Jeff did a great job of describing it. What I would say is that the way it's kept my light lit with this and those of folks like John Olsen from North Carolina who is there. Aaron Rinehart, Keith Wages who presumably in the audience there and other EMSers is that FirstNet is going to change the way EMS is practiced in the field forever and it's going to save lives. It's going to make the healthcare system work better. It truly is going to be a game changer for us. And all that we've been through, all I can say is I'm looking forward to the next five years. And whatever I can do on the Board and when I leave the

Board because I think this is one of the best things that happened to public safety ever. Thank you.

SUE SWENSON: Thank you, Kevin. Mayor Parker or Ed Reynolds, any comments before we come back to the Board here in the auditorium?

ED REYNOLDS: This is Ed Reynolds. It's been my honor to be a Board member since the inception of the FirstNet Board. One thing I can say from the very beginning is this Board has had, believe it or not, a bias for action since Day 1, to get moving, get going and get this National Broadband Network implemented as rapidly as possible to serve public safety and to serve the public. It may be hard to imagine the full existence of a bias for action in four or five years to get to this point. Looking backwards does us no good. The fact is we're where we are at a great place right now and looking forward to getting this implemented. I urge the staff to keep pushing as the Board has with a bias for action to get this implemented as we are committed. Thank you.

SUE SWENSON: Thank you, Ed. Mayor Parker, anything from you? Otherwise I'll come back to the auditorium. Okay. Governor Douglas, I think you might have a comment or two.

GOVERNOR JAMES DOUGLAS: Well, I might? Thank you. I'm a relatively new Board member coming in the same class as Mayor Parker and Chris and Rich. But the National Governors Association was active in encouraging the Congress to create the authority. That's been years ago, because the Nation's chief executives understand the importance of building out this network, to provide the information that the public safety community needs in times of crisis. I want to acknowledge in particular that the focus that the Congress placed on coverage in rural areas. Many of us are from rural parts of our country and the economic model might sometimes make it more challenging to develop a network there. But crises happen everywhere. And it's particularly important in a state like Vermont that I've often noted as topographically challenged, to build out a network for all of our nooks and crannies. So I think that was an important focus.

And I don't want to suggest a cloud in the silver lining, but although this is an important milestone, we've got lots of work to do. And over the coming months, of course, we'll be presenting plans to each governor and territorial leader and the District of Columbia offering to buildout the network at no risk and no cost to that entity, to provide the resources that our public safety professionals need. And so I look forward to working with our management team and my gubernatorial colleagues to render those plans and implement them as quickly as we possibly can. But I want to thank you for your leadership and all my Board colleagues for their work and our great staff led by Mike and TJ for their hard work.

SUE SWENSON: Thank you, Governor. You've provided us a lot of good insight into the world in which you live which I don't understand very well. So I really appreciate everything you've helped me on that. It's a challenging area. Teri I think you said you wanted to make a comment?

TERI TAKAI: Thank you, Madam Chair. And again, I just wanted to add my thanks to not only you and Jeff and everyone who was on the Board originally, but everyone that's come on since then. It's been a real challenge going forward. I only had a couple of comments. First of all, I think I would very much like to thank the Department of Commerce and NTIA. You know we had some- a lot of discussions, some of them good and some of them challenging. But I think Larry Strickling and his staff, those folks that actually first approached all of us to be a part of the Board. And helped to guide us through the early days of trying to understand how the federal process would address this. So I just wanted to make sure that, you know, we said thank you to those folks because I think they were a big part of that.

And then lastly, I just wanted to really echo what Governor Douglas said. I think all of us as the Board have worked hard to get us to this point. But I think we all recognize that we have a lot of work to do and think all of us are very much intending, certainly as I've talked to my colleagues on the Board, to be very active going forward. And working with public safety both at the local and state level. And, you know, certainly for my part, you know, I'm really looking forward to working with a lot of the technology professionals in the state and local organizations. So I just want to make sure, you know, this isn't, sort of the Board breathing a sigh of relief. It's a one-time, take a breath. Say wow, you know, we've gotten to this point, which has been really, you know, exciting for us.

But I think we all know that some of the really hard work is going to still be out there to come. But we're all braced and we're all ready for it. And, you know, we certainly want to offer to Mike and to TJ for all the, you know, outstanding effort and TJ thank you. You've been this from the very beginning and a lot of those ups and downs. And, you know, that we stand ready to continue to be supportive and to do what (unintelligible).

SUE SWENSON: Absolutely, thank you Teri. Ed?

EDWARD HOROWITZ: Thank you, Madam Chair. So on September 11th, I was scheduled to be at the Windows on the World restaurant at 8:30 in the morning for a meeting that had been relocated to midtown Manhattan a few days before because the size of the meeting outgrew the space that we were set to get together in. And so I am very fortunate to be sitting here today. Honored to be on this Board with people with backgrounds that you have serving the community that saves lives every single day. And often goes, does so in an unheralded and underappreciated manner. So for one, I would like to extend my gratitude for being here and being able to serve with this Board and with you, and to the first responder community.

And as mentioned before, this is a moment to take a breath because this now is the start of the real work which is gaining alignment by the states and getting alignment by public safety. Getting alignment with the SMEs to build out a commercial enterprise that serves both the needs of public safety and also has a commercial outcome that enables us to be self-sustaining, which is a key component of all of this. And I think that the procurement process, best I have ever witnessed both private and public and the way we've gotten here professionalism that was (unintelligible) the development of principles under which request for proposals was developed.

The respondents and the manner in which they tried to meet these principles, the review process by our staff or selection authority to the point where, when someone called out to examine whether we had done it properly. An independent authority put (unintelligible) that we have done so in an extraordinary manner.

So we have a lot of pride to be here at this point in time. Going forward, we've got to build and they've got to come. And it's got to work and we have to work it. And so I'm looking forward to the next 25 years as we maybe even on the (unintelligible) as we go through this. Thank you.

SUE SWENSON: Thank you, Ed. Very much appreciate it. Neil?

NEIL COX: Thank you, Madam Chair. You know, this Board has been an example of how diversity works. You have people from diverse backgrounds that's why this Board is so strong and why this Board works. Because what I was thinking and what I would say today, you know, I look back on my career and I've seen a lot of changes in telecommunications. I'm so excited for this day as we move forward with this public, private partnership to build this network. Which as we talked about, will make the first responders more productive, safer, and really affect everyone in the U.S. and make their lives all safer.

But I always want to say, you know, when we roll this network out, and we look at what technologies are available today, you got to really look at what's going to be there for the future. I was lucky enough to sit on a board one time with Jim Lovell who was the Commander of Apollo 13. And this was 30 years after his flight and we were on the board together and he said, Neil, do you know that your home has more processing power than what we did for the Apollo project? He said, you have more processing power in your home than what we had to do the Apollo mission. They were actually doing burns on the ends of stopwatches that they were wearing on their wrists.

And I look at this network and this partnership and what it's going to do for our first responders and the public in general. And it just couldn't be prouder to be associated with this day. So Madam Chair, you and those who came before us, you did a wonderful job, all of you. And we're, kind of, the Ed and I are probably the last two newest members and we really- we joined in part. Once we saw the caliber of this team of people, we knew we made the right decision. So I thank you and look forward to moving this project forward.

SUE SWENSON: Thanks very much. You know, one of the things I was going to say, you know, we're talking about the work to be done. I, actually, had a lot practice and, you know, I know there's a lot of work to be done, but actually I think this is going to be pretty rewarding. I mean all of this up until now, obviously, has been a precursor to this. But I think we're now entering into the territory of actually seeing the substantive impact, you know, of our efforts. So I think we've had a lot of good practice Teri and I think we're, kind of just you know. It's kind of like in training. We were in training. So now we're going to get out to the real race. So I think that's the case.

And I would just like to comment and then I'm going to turn it over to some of our colleagues in public safety to make a few comments. But, you know, for me, I keep getting asked all the time because people see all the challenges we've had. And they say why in the heck would you ever do something like this? And why are you continuing to do it? I said it's really simple, it's about the mission. And so whenever there's a roadblock in our way and we've had plenty of them, we just keep that in mind and we never lose sight of the goal. And frankly, that's what's kept me here and Jeff will tell you. I say things like 'we' now. I mean I say 'we'. I mean I completely assimilated. I hope you don't mind.

JEFF JOHNSON: We promoted you a long time ago.

SUE SWENSON: I've completely assimilated, you know, into the public safety environment. So it's been my pleasure and honor and privilege, you know, to lead this effort. And I'm ready for the actual race. It's like we've been in training for a while. I'd like to start off the comments for public safety just a couple of them with Harlin McEwen. I think everybody knows Harlin. Harlin's been involved in public safety for quite some time. I think everybody knows that Harlin is the PSAC chair. He's also was or is the IACP honorary president, retired Chief of Police from Ithaca, New York, and the retired Deputy Assistant Director in the FBI. So, Harlin brings not only a wealth of experience and has been a great advisor to me, and to other members of the Board and to management. But he's become a personal friend. And, you know, it's been great Harlin for the last couple of years and I just want to give you an opportunity because I know this is a very special day for you.

HARLIN MCEWEN: Thank you, Sue. I appreciate this opportunity. I want to thank all of the public safety people here today and many others that have been on this journey with us for a long period of time. I want to first start off by saying I'm really representing the Public Safety Advisory Committee which represents everybody in this room and the public safety community, any of the speakers here today. Two of the Executive Committee members Tom Sorley and Paul Patrick are here with me today and we've really enjoyed working with all of you.

For me and for some people in this room, this has been a 20-year journey. So let me just walk you through that journey quickly. So in 1997, Congress directed the Federal Communications Commission to allocate a new spectrum to the public safety community in the 700 MHz space. Half of the spectrum that will make us this network was awarded in 1997. So without that, you would not be here. And as you'll, kind of, get the feel of what I'm saying today is that each of these pieces, by the way, were not simple things to accomplish. That took three years of work to get the Congress to take that action and then several years before the FCC took the action and started us down this road.

It's an interesting experience for me. It's been a bipartisan effort. We have lived through with support up and down from four administrations; Clinton Administration, Bush II, Obama and now Trump. And each of them have contributed perhaps both negatively and positively at various times in that journey. But without their eventual support, we wouldn't be here. Same thing applies to Congress. We've been through multiple flippings of which party was in charge

of the Congress over that 20-year period. And again with plus and minus experiences eventually we were able to get the support of those people in Congress on both sides of the aisle or we wouldn't be here. And those are important.

Jeff mentioned earlier that Morgan O'Brien, and the reason it's important, you know, there's no one person responsible for this. But as far as this network is concerned, Morgan O'Brien was the brainchild. In 2005, he asked me to come to Washington and have breakfast with him. And he gave me this vision that he had of a new nationwide broadband public safety network. It was a little different than where we are today. It wasn't quite the way we've come out. But I remember clearly saying to him, I don't think that's got a chance in Hell. And then I said, can you give me some more things about it. And I started spinning his idea and eventually he won me over, 2006 just a few years ago, you know. He unveiled his vision at the IWCE as the keynote. And then, of course, as you know, a lot of things have happened since then where we are today but he should be given credit for the thought, the vision.

Jeff mentioned the public safety spectrum trust. Again, the public safety national organizations, most of which are all represented here today, had a vision for moving this forward. We didn't have any other support other than, you know, trying to get the advocacy going. Get Congress and the FCC and others to support this. And we created a not for profit corporation, which operated for several years and held the license for half of the spectrum that makes up FirstNet. And again, we didn't really run across the finish line, but if they hadn't done what they did, we wouldn't be here.

The next significant effect was in 2009, when the Major City Chiefs and the Major County Sheriffs decided that there was a need to bring together with a single vision in the public safety community an effort to get the D Block spectrum. It was clearly recognized that the spectrum we had from 1997 was not going to adequately serve in the network that we're talking about today. And that D Block effort was again, a milestone, not a simple task. We were dealing with both sides of the aisle. There was a lot of skepticism. But eventually, as you know, the law was passed in 2012 brought that to, you know the FirstNet vision.

And so again, in that year, 2012, the Board, some of which are here today and others, the Board was created and the Public Safety Advisory Committee was created to represent the public safety community. I think that's a significant issue for public safety because as has been mentioned, we have wonderful Board members here both representing public safety and the industry. Who have, you know, done yeomen's work to support us getting to where we are today. But you needed that steady public safety advice and we think we have been able to give you that.

And then last year, the RFP was issued and we know we went through a period with that and we now are where we are today. So again, I just want to finish by saying there's so many people in this room that have made this come to where we are today. And now what we want to do is watch this network get built. I've been in my law enforcement career 60 years. This took me 1/3 of my law enforcement career to get this done. So I just want to finish by thanking you, Sue and Jeff and the other public safety and industry Board members and federal Board members. I want

to particularly thank the FirstNet leadership, Mike Poth, TJ Kennedy, Rich Reed, Jeff Bratcher, Ed Parkinson, and Amanda Hilliard and many others and Jason Karp. Without all of those people and the people what work with them and for them, we wouldn't be here today. So that's my story and I'm sticking to it.

SUE SWENSON: It's a pretty good one.

(Applause)

TOM MANGER: Good morning, Madam Chair. I'm Tom Manger. I'm the president of the Major Cities Chiefs Association and it's a privilege for me to be there to address the Board on behalf of the Nation's largest police department. First, Madam Chair, I want to thank you and the Board for the great work you've done. And to get us to this point. And I think Mr. Horowitz, you have got the new mission statement already written. We've got to build it. They've got to come. It's got to work. So I think that sums it up. Thank you very much for that.

Since the terrorist attacks of 9/11, the Major Cities Chiefs Association along with other police associations and public safety organizations, we've been working with Congress and now three different Presidents to bring forward a national public safety network. And I have to tell you that we all, everyone in this room, everyone in this Nation owes a great debt of gratitude for this man sitting to my left, Harlin McEwen. He has been just a tremendous advocate and a real voice of strength and purpose for this effort to move along. And so we all truly, truly owe him a great debt of gratitude.

(Applause)

The Major Cities Chiefs Association has been part of this conversation for a long time and that's why we're so excited to be here today to see this move to the implementation phase. Please know, the major cities around this Nation, major counties, I'll speak for Sheriff Stanek, are going to be, not only your biggest customers, but we will be your strongest advocates. Please know that we're fully committed to work and to help the FirstNet organization during this implementation phase and you can absolutely depend on public safety to give you the support that it needs.

We're looking forward to engaging your commercial partner and we will stay involved as the network is built. And I will invite Mike and TJ. We are having our national conference in Las Vegas, and on May 31st, I invite you to be there to give us a progress report on how things are going. Madam Chair, thank you for the great work that you and your Board have done.

SUE SWENSON: Thank you so much.

JOHN SINCLAIR: Madam Chair, members of the Board, thank you for the opportunity to say a few words. My name is John Sinclair. I'm a Fire Chief in Ellisburg, Washington for an organization called Kittitas Valley Fire and Rescue. And I'm also the president and chair of the board of the International Association of Fire Chiefs. I just want to start by expressing our thanks

from the public safety community of your hard work. As Jeff was outlining all of the hurdles and everything that you had to make this pass, it may have seemed impossible. I remember the briefings when I was on the Board that yourself and Jeff would give. And many times you would come in and say, it's a heavy lift.

Well you all apparently have been going to the gym because you were able to accomplish the heavy lift along with everybody else. Obviously, the Fire Chiefs and public safety fought hard to establish FirstNet because we know that the network is urgently needed to increase the safety and capabilities of all public safety personnel and protect the American public. The IFC and public safety are united behind the desire to see FirstNet succeed and we will continue to fight for public safety access to the best available technology to keep the public safe.

There's three real points that I want to talk about, but I want to make sure that you know and understand that the first job of every Police Chief, every Sheriff, every EMS Chief, every Fire Chief is first and foremost the protection of their people. And I'm sort of reflective here of the Seattle 4, the Worcester 6, the Charleston 9 and the Yarnelle 19 as examples of firefighters that died in the line of duty because of a lack of situational awareness. This technology, this ability for us to increase our situational awareness, is going to be incredibly helpful to everybody that is on scene. It will help with our interoperability when we're working out there with our law enforcement and EMS public works comrades and colleagues. As we look at facing down emergencies in all types of communities from the most urban to the most rural. This technology is going to allow us to be able to have that interoperability and that situational awareness.

We already talked about the fact that it is important for public safety to have at least the capabilities of a teenager. And the fact that this will allow us to have smart devices at least as smart as the ones that our kids have. And the other thing that I want to point out is that despite what may be happening, healthcare in this country is going to change. EMS is part of the overall healthcare community and the way in which we provide healthcare is going to change. It's going to have to change. And so it is important for us to recognize that this ability with the ability to send and receive data, to add to that situational awareness, to tie into things like intelligent transportation systems, all of those different types of things to be able to go from somebody's home and be able to send video or lab results into a hospital. To make sure that the patient then goes to the right place in the right amount of time will save lives.

So what you've done over the last 20 years, as Harlin states, is work on a system that will save lives not only directly, but also indirectly by building the ability for us to be more effective, more efficient. And as representing the International Association of Fire Chiefs and most importantly, the Fire Chief of a rural community, thank you for your hard work and I appreciate your efforts.

SUE SWENSON: Thank you so much.

(Applause)

MIKE DUYCK: Chair Swenson, Vice Chair Johnson, members of the Board, my name's Mike Duyck. I'm the Fire Chief of Tualatin Valley Fire and Rescue in Oregon. It's a pleasure to be here. First, I'd like to thank you in this phase of the process. The fact is we've been through a lot together. We've- the entire public safety community has pushed for the D Block spectrum to get it the opportunity (unintelligible). Tualatin Valley Fire and Rescue is honored to host several of the FirstNet Board members and staff in early 2013 and show them firsthand what was the environment, what were the needs in fire and emergency medical services across the country.

Contrary to what they may have told you, we did not hurt them. You know, we have very much enjoyed the process that you have created so the network is built on the needs and input from public safety. Public safety has become much more reliant on applications and data. But the limiting factor has been, we don't have a public safety-grade network. FirstNet will allow us to better utilize the precious resources that we have and create better outcomes in the communities that we serve. You will give us the mission-critical network devices and applications that will assist in saving lives and property. You also create the opportunity to increase the safety of our staff, our firefighters, our paramedics by the use of the network.

Although I have some immediate thoughts on how we might leverage the network, really the true ingenuity and innovation will come when you put the capacity and capability of FirstNet in the hands of public safety specialists. So I know we're not done. And thank you in advance for getting the network stood up. But we are anxiously awaiting FirstNet going live and stand ready to help in any way to get us there.

(Applause)

SUE SWENSON: So if you aren't inspired yet, you know, I really appreciate all your comments. I mean it resonates in my head day in and day out but hearing it again, you never hear it enough. So thank you for your comments and we'll continue to work diligently to make sure that we continue on the path that we started several years ago to bring this to reality. So again, thanks for your comments.

Oh, Chief? You're good? You want to say something Chief? Go ahead.

RICHARD CARRIZZO: I'm Richard Carrizzo, Fire Chief of Southern Platte Fire Protection District (unintelligible). Chairman and the rest of the Board, I just want to say thank you for your leadership that you've provided up to this point. And I would hope that my (unintelligible) to you today would be that the breath is not a large breath, but a short breath. And that we're able to keep moving on this very quickly. So I just want to thank you all for your leadership.

SUE SWENSON: Thank you, Chief.

(Applause)

MAN: You have all missed the mark. You have understated everything here all together. Today is truly an historic moment. Today is a unified effort, probably one of the first times that we've ever experienced all public safety standing solidly together with all of you as partners. So as one of those people who will benefit from what's happened, I have to say thanks because now we're at what I think as a convergence. FirstNet could not be coming at a better time. It will now have the chance to be the core of communications that link all different technologies. Interface interoperability with land mobile radios. Connect you with drones flying the sky and giving us visual ideas we've never seen before. And the new technologies that will all link this together in smart devices that we haven't even seen yet.

So thank you for changing the lives of public safety in a way that most of us will never see anything of this magnitude ever again in our careers. So thank you.

SUE SWENSON: Thank you. We just want to make sure that we get to see it before it's our time to move on. So I just want you to know that we're going to work very hard to make sure we get to see some of this in reality. I think our CEO would like to just make a few closing comments, Mike?

MIKE POTH: Just a few.

SUE SWENSON: Just a few.

MIKE POTH: All right, I want to thank the Board for this important decision and all that you've done over the years to make this a reality. This represents the final step toward finalizing the network's procurement. But it's the final step to the first rung in the ladder. As everyone's talked about now it's time to get to work and we have a lot to accomplish. At our next Board meeting, I'm going to be excited to actually be reporting on our three-month progress report and not an acquisition or litigation or pick a topic update. It'll be an actual progress report of where we are three months into this effort.

As the Board knows, FirstNet was not created just to issue an award, an RFP. We're here to work in this public/private partnership on behalf of public safety. Before closing out the meeting though, I do want to acknowledge many others who have helped us to get to where we are today. First to our FirstNet team, the employees and contractors. You've worked tirelessly over the years, especially thank you to your families who have sacrificed and supported you on the countless trips, meetings and late nights. It wasn't even possible without you, period.

We also owe a debt of gratitude to the Secretary in the Department of Commerce and NTIA who were instrumental along the way with FirstNet Board in building this independent authority from scratch. There were zero employees when this thing started. So thank you very much.

Thanks for our partners at the Department of Interior for their contracting expertise, guidance, and support over the last year. They were a significant and instrumental partner. I'd also like to acknowledge the work of our federal Board partners, Departments of Justice and Homeland

Security and the Office of Management and Budget for their contributions. But more importantly their contributions going forward also. We're excited to have them continue on the Board and look forward to working with them.

But most importantly I want to thank the more than 150,000 federal, state, tribal, local first responders and other public safety stakeholders we've interacted with over the last few years to make sure their needs were represented. The First Responder Network Authority was born to help first responders who are protecting our families and communities throughout the country 24 hours a day. Thank you to public safety. And as we just head today from key leaders from the public safety community, this network will be a game changer for how they do business. It'll give them capacity, public safety features and the innovations they need to save lives.

So I'm honored to take the baton and move quickly for our Nation's law enforcement, fire and emergency medical personnel who work to protect us every day. I will work with DOI to complete the acquisition and contract process quickly and we will award the contract within the week. So please watch for updates and announcements as we step lively through that process. And there will be no letting up on this public/private partnership once it's awarded. We'll immediately start working on delivering this network to public safety and fulfilling our promise to them.

The outcome will be a major commitment to public safety in the significant investment in the infrastructure and communications they use every day for every emergency. Just to give you a couple of highlights and there will be obviously a lot more information relative to the contract and award, but all 16 objectives in the RFP were met, period. Specialize in public safety features on a national scale and our way. As Kathy mentioned, you know, we are going to be hypervigilant in our cybersecurity requirements and capitalize on the best practices both within the private sector and the federal government including FISMA.

This partnership will generate billions of dollars in additional revenue that will be reinvested into the network So it'll revolve with technology and deliver innovation for public safety. And it will be a sustainable network, self-funding. A network that maximizes existing infrastructure and achieves our rural buildout objectives and creates tens of thousands of new jobs.

FirstNet is ready. Public safety is ready. We're thrilled to move into the next phase. We're confident about the value proposition that we'll be bringing to the states and public safety and we are excited to see the impact that this network will have in making the communities safer across America. So all in all at FirstNet, we call that a good day's work. So thank you to the Board and thank you Madam Chair.

SUE SWENSON: Thank you Mike.

(Applause)

Well this is a wonderful day for a lot of people. We are going to have a small reception out in the lobby of the Commerce Building. So when we move to adjourn the meeting, we would ask you to join us if you have time. I'd love to be able to talk to you individually and again to thank you for everything that you've done. This is truly an historic day. And one that we'll remember for quite some time and we got to get back to work, right? We got to get this thing done. So with that, I would move to- unless there are any other comments. Let me check with the Board to see if there's any other comments or from management. Nothing? I would move that we adjourn this historic March 28th meeting of FirstNet.

MAN: Second.

SUE SWENSON: Thank you. All those in favor, please acknowledge by saying aye.

Group: Aye.

SUE SWENSON: I don't think there's any objections or abstentions. Thank you. We are adjourned.

END