



Marty Kelly
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TO: Goodhue County Board of Commissioners

FROM: Sheriff Marty Kelly
Captain Chad Steffen

DATE: March 25, 2025

RE: Southeast Minnesota Emergency Communications Board (SEMNECB) – Administrator and Fiscal Agent Proposal

This memo is intended to provide background on a funding proposal currently under consideration by the Southeast Minnesota Emergency Communications Board (SEMNECB), where Commissioner Todd Greseth serves as our representative.

Since the SEMNECB's formation in 2008, the Olmsted County Sheriff's Office has provided a full-time employee (FTE) to support the regional board. Approximately 30–40% of this FTE's responsibilities have included administering the work of the SEMNECB and coordinating its various committees and workgroups. Member counties have historically contributed \$1,000 annually to cover regional insurance and maintenance of shared communications equipment—however, these dues did not account for the administrative services being provided.

Earlier this year, Olmsted County informed the SEMNECB that they intend to withdraw from their administrator and fiscal agent responsibilities by June 2025. Despite outreach, no other member county has stepped forward to take on these duties—particularly without compensation.

In response, Olmsted County floated a cost-sharing concept to the Fiscal Agent / Administrator Search Committee. They indicated a willingness to continue serving in this role if the board supported a model that covered 30–40% of the FTE's time. Based on that discussion, the committee is recommending a dues increase to support this cost.

If approved at the next SEMNECB meeting on April 14, 2025, this proposal would result in:

- An unbudgeted 2025 payment of \$3,334, as our dues for the year have already been paid.
- An ongoing annual dues increase to \$4,334 per member beginning in 2026, totaling \$52,000 regionally.

This change is being proposed to maintain continuity and ensure regional operations remain effectively supported. Should any commissioner have feedback or concerns, please feel free to share them directly with Commissioner Todd Greseth, who will be present at the April meeting and can bring our county's perspective forward.

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Please let Captain Chad Steffen know if you would like further detail or background on this matter.

What is the Southeast Minnesota Emergency Communications Board (SEMNECB)?

The Southeast Minnesota Emergency Communications Board (SEMNECB) is one of seven regional Emergency Communications Boards (ECBs) established under the State of Minnesota’s strategic framework for interoperable public safety communications. SEMNECB represents **eleven counties** in southeastern Minnesota and serves as the regional governance body for managing emergency communication initiatives, technology planning, and grant coordination.

Core Responsibilities of SEMNECB:

- **Oversight of Regional Communications Infrastructure** – such as ARMER radio systems, Next-Generation 911, and shared technology platforms.
- **Support and Coordination** – for Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs), Emergency Managers, IT, and communications professionals.
- **Policy and Standards Development** – in alignment with state-level strategies and standards.
- **Grant and Fiscal Management** – including application, oversight, and distribution of state and federal communications grants.
- **Interoperability Planning** – ensuring effective communication among jurisdictions, disciplines, and agencies during daily operations and large-scale emergencies.

SEMNECB includes representation from emergency management, public safety agencies, and county leadership, and operates through various **committees and workgroups**, such as the Regional Advisory Committee (RAC), Owners and Operators Committee, and the NG911 Committee.

How It Fits into the State’s Governance Structure:

Minnesota’s emergency communications governance is a tiered system, coordinated under the Statewide Emergency Communications Board (SECB). The SECB establishes statewide policy and provides oversight for critical systems like:

- **ARMER (Allied Radio Matrix for Emergency Response)**
- **NG911 (Next Generation 911)**
- **Integrated Public Alert & Warning Systems (IPAWS)**

The SECB works in partnership with regional ECBs/ESBs (Emergency Communications or Services Boards), including SEMNECB, to ensure consistent implementation of communications standards and operational practices across the state. These regions function as **the operational arms of the SECB**, adapting state-level guidance to local needs and bringing local concerns up to the state level.

Each ECB is also supported by the Department of Public Safety’s Emergency Communication Networks (ECN) division, which provides technical support, policy guidance, and funding administration.

STEELE COUNTY

Greg Krueger, Commissioner

Administration Center

630 Florence Ave.

P.O. Box 890

Owatonna, MN 55060

507-444-7400

March 24, 2025

Greetings,

The Fiscal Agent / Administrator Search Committee, formed during the joint RAC/ECB meeting in February, has been meeting regularly to explore options and solutions regarding the Fiscal Agent / Administrator role. After thoughtful discussion, the Committee has determined that Olmsted County has agreed to continue in this capacity, assisting and addressing the evolving needs of the group moving forward.

To facilitate this; the Committee recommends that the Regional ECB Board compensate Olmsted County for the time of their employee starting in 2025. To cover these costs, each member is being asked to contribute \$3,334.00 additional for the current year.

In 2026, each member will be asked to pay the revised dues rate of \$4,334.00 (\$52,000.00 total) to support the operating expenses as well as the Fiscal Agent / Administrator role.

Unfortunately, due to a lack of a quorum at the March RAC meeting, the committee was unable formally make a recommendation. However, this proposal reflects the opinions of the six members who attended the informational meeting.

It is the intention of the ECB members who participated in the committee to bring this proposal to a vote at the next SE ECB meeting scheduled for April 14, 2025. Voting members are kindly requested to discuss this matter with their RAC membership and peers within their respective boards and share any tentative agreements or concerns with the SE ECB ahead of the meeting.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Sincerely,



Greg Krueger, Steele County
Commissioner SE ECB Chair