Massachusetts Communications Supervisors Association
Meeting Minutes for December 12, 2001
Gardner, MA

Dinner at 12:30 hrs. To Order: 13:15 James Lake, Presiding

Attendance: Reid Bagley; Rita Burke; Leslie Carroll, Stephen Cote; Laurie Favreau; Butch Garrity; David Hansen; James Lake; Peter Mason; Michael Sallese; Monna Wallace

1. **Secretary's Minutes**
   Minutes not presented or distributed

2. **Treasurer's Report**
   - Treasurer's annual report distributed.
     - There was a net loss reported on the first Dispatch Academy primarily due to too many books ordered. This should balance out after the next class.
     - Report attached
   - There was discussion re membership dues paid. Some outstanding dues. Members can contact Mr. Garrity for confirmation of payment.

3. **Legislative Matters**
   - The House of Representatives is into the 3rd reading of the Wireless Telecommunications bill. This law would provide funding for 911 wireless funding
   - Info has been posted on the MCSA website (MA911.0rg)
   - Mr. Lake noted that there are two bills (Wireless and Wireline) in legislation. Both are of interest to PS Comm.

4. **Dispatch Academy**
   - Academy Class 2002-1 will begin on January 14, 2002 and will run until February 15. This date, different from the one discussed at our October meeting, was chosen because of demand from agencies for an earlier start.
   - With the cost experience of the first Academy, it was determined that tuition would be ~~$425~~ 495 for member agencies: ~~$475~~ 525. Emphasis will be placed on agencies becoming members for added savings.
   - This class will, again, be limited to students sponsored by their hiring agencies. There is just too much demand and we are still too new at this to open up to self-sponsored individuals.

- It was suggested that, in the future, we only accept students "sponsored" by an agency, even if not actually hired by them. This would be modeled on the practice of the Police Academy.

- At present we have extended our limit of 18 students to 25 to accommodate demand from several agencies:
  - Brookline Public Safety is building an entire new consolidated center and will have 15 trainees needed to meet proposed opening date.
  - Cambridge Public Safety needed five trainees in a class ASAP to meet their crucial staffing needs.
  - Templeton PD will be sending 2 students
  - Arlington Public Safety will send 2 students
  - Waltham PD is sending 1 students
- This newest Academy will cut the course length to 5 weeks by eliminating some repeated or redundant topics.
- There was too wide a spread on computer familiarity so this segment will be cut. Agencies will have to deal with that when they orient new trainees to their local systems.
- There was discussion on the desirability of 25 students as opposed to 18. Suggestions for handling this many were:
  - Split some class days to AM and PM sessions
  - Alternate "Call Simulation" days with other topics to speed up rotation through those limited resources.
- Ms. Favreau strongly urged closer communication between instructors during this Academy as there were several disconnects last time resulting in uncomfortable or embarrassing moments for both staff and students.
  - Discussion about means and methods of passing information between instructors
    - A running commentary page attached to the Attendance Roster to which instructors could append comments and advisories. Each instructor could review this before launching his or her own class.
    - Students are advised that the class day is ~~8-4~~ 9-5 and that any deviation is an unusual event. They are not to expect to get out early. This should mitigate "clock watching" and grumbling that "instructor X always lets us out at xxPM".
    - It is possible that an instructors page can be placed on the website. This will be looked into.

5. **MCSA Website**

- The website (MA911.org) is nearly fully functional
- Jim Lake, George Fosque, and Dave Clemmons attended classes enabling them to operate and maintain the site.
- News and most recent Legislative and Academy offering are listed

- Tune in and check it out

6. **Other Business**

- Peter Mason presented his experience on the new Basic Telecommunicator Course being offered by Priority Dispatch (nee Medical Priority Dispatch). He took the "Train the Trainer" course and found it to be a viable alternative to the APCO BTO course we have traditionally used. He reports that the course is comprehensive and well thought out. It is burned onto a CD ROM as well as in slides and texts so it can be used in a variety of class situations. Because Priority Dispatch is attempting to carve out a piece of a market that APCO has dominated, they are offering this course at quite reasonable prices, temporarily: $73/Manual (45 with certificate); $475 for Instructor Certificate.
  - **MOTION/PASSED: (Ms. Favreau)** We should keep the APCO-40 hour course this time and explore the PD-40 for future classes.
- Mr. Garrity proposed a "911 For Kids" program. He noted that children originate many 911 calls and that many of these young people are instrumental in good outcomes to calls. He proposes a system of detecting these occurrences and providing public recognition of the child's role in the Public Safety System.
  - Ms. Wallace said that SETB would be interested in such a program
  - A task force was set up to look into this, consisting of:
    - Butch Garrity
    - Leslie Carroll
    - Steve Cote
- It was noted that the winner of the 2001 Grossman Award for Dispatch Excellence was won by a member of the Jim Lake's Northampton Public Safety Department. Congratulations are in order!

7. Next Meeting

- **January 16, 2002**
- **Baldwin House Restaurant, Templeton**

Adjourned: 14:45
S.J. Cote, Recorder