

NRPC Tackles 700 MHz Planning

The National Regional Planning Council (NRPC) is beginning its second year, and a lot has happened since the organization formed. The council looks forward to achieving its goals early in the year and beginning new projects later in the year. NRPC is a group of volunteers who have nothing to gain except helping each other achieve 700 MHz-approved plans by the FCC.

NRPC's funding comes from a National Institute of Justice (NIJ) grant, which will be administered by the winner of a request for proposals (RFP) released by NIJ. The group uses the Computer Assisted Pre-Coordination Resource and Database System (CAPRAD), also maintained through a grant from NIJ. This funding is carefully monitored and must meet federal guidelines. Therefore, NRPC is not only nonprofit, it isn't controlled by a funding source. The council's meetings, travel and administrative support are carefully controlled and monitored. Members are public-safety minded people who only have public safety at heart.

NRPC has been working cooperatively with several groups; however, the council has been called into question about what it is and why it should be considered a legitimate group. We have presented our members' long histories in public safety. Most members are still full-time employees of public-safety entities who hope to be deemed worthy by other organizations this year and be included in their ranks.

There is much happening in the 700 MHz band. The 700 MHz broadband issue is still being decided. The concept of a nationwide broadband public-safety network will continue to be discussed. The NRPC has filed comments with the FCC about this subject.

No one knows how this will work out. The NRPC has been recommended to be on the board of directors if the project becomes a reality. We will continue to watch for more this year and be prepared to participate when called on.

Let's not forget the 700 MHz narrowband voice side. Now that 800 MHz rebanding is moving along and the digital TV (DTV) transition deadline is here, the 700 MHz frequencies will be needed quickly. This is where the NRPC steps in. Members must get 700 MHz plans done and approved so these channels can be used by public safety.

To NRPC held joint training sessions with the Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials (APCO) International at its Orlando, Fla., meeting in February. APCO received a grant to support planners to rework 800 MHz plans. NRPC members — 75 percent of 700 MHz planners are also 800 MHz planners —

ings and the industry. Some of the members of this group have been involved in FCC actions for years. This committee prepares and submits the documents that the group files.

The CAPRAD committee uses and monitors the CAPRAD system. As enhancements are discussed, the committee reviews and recommends changes. The committee is working on training modules, as well as training to cover beginner and advanced users.

The training committee is one of the busiest groups. Getting a 700 MHz plan prepared, submitted and approved by the FCC and then administered is directly connected to training. NRPC is here to help its fellow members and provide tools.

The economy, the new presidential administration, new congressional members and potential changes in FCC members promise that 2009 will create changes in our industry. Be assured that the NRPC will be working hard to

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worked to revise their 800 MHz plans while others worked on 700 MHz plans and received either beginner or advanced training in CAPRAD.

The Organization

The cornerstones of the council are the four district directors who work closely with the regional planners in their respective regions of the country, as well as with the entire organization. Again, the years of public-safety communications experience from these four gentlemen are impressive. In addition, the three committees and their chairmen are what make the organization move and grow.

The technical committee is comprised of the technical-minded people who interpret and report on FCC rul-

complete its challenges and prepare for future steps.

Get to know us, and we will not take for granted any support you show.

NRPC supports the concept that its members always have their own voices; we don't speak for our members. We respect that each member's challenges don't have to match everybody else. It's a big country, and needs differ. We welcome your comments too. ■

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