

Governance Group meeting notes 12/19/16

Charlie Baker, Dan Manz, Jeffrey Barton, Steve Bourgeois, Steve Locke, Al Barber, Aaron Frank, Ann Janda, Lee Krohn, Trevor Whipple, Joe Colangelo, Dawn Francis, Ray Coffey, Kevin Dorn, Jan Wright, Andrew Bolduc (new SB city attorney); also Paco Aumand, Executive Director of the Central Vermont Public Safety Authority (CVPSA)

Progress to date on analyzing governance models was reviewed.

Regional authority... may meet needs, but may take too long, as requires legislative approval.

Contracting: works small scale but not county wide, may not offer longer term stability.

RPC regional service model: already authorized in statute, so may not take as long to implement, at least as interim approach.

Hybrid approach: intermunicipal contract and shared services facilitated by CCRPC? We can provide coordination, planning, GIS, and finance support.

Governance models reviewed.

Who would own the debt? Need a legal entity whether PSA, nonprofit... municipal members would have to agree to pay, have to own it even if they leave. Lease/purchase? G.O. bond % owned by munis? Must be backed by contracts. Similar to PSA but no need go to legislature for approval. Governing board – managers; with a technical advisory committee – Police/Fire/Rescue Chiefs.

Paco Aumand – invited guest, spoke of experience to date with CVPSA. It was formed under the union municipal corporation statute by the cities of Barre and Montpelier. First attempt was a more management oriented, detailed operations plan, but this didn't work out.

Both PDs and dispatch are represented by unions. Needed a labor waiver to work for an entity other than PD. But can't make overall dispatch transition until both municipalities approve ceding of authority... timing was a challenge, dispatchers were concerned with lack of information about salary/benefits, but couldn't discuss yet due to collective bargaining rules.

CVPSA is approaching merger in two phases: take over management and direction of two dispatch centers in FY18, create standard operating procedures for both, determine performance measures, implement quality assurance program... Then link the two call centers via technology to share work in FY19. Concerns expressed locally if this was too rushed. Mayors and Chiefs support the concept to improve efficiency and effectiveness, but employee concerns and other matters may take more time.

Barre City ceded authority, but Mayor had questions of cost. Both cities want to know more about and growth potential and return on investment.

Plan B: ask City Councils in January 2017 to cede authority to the Exec. Dir. and Exec. Committee for phase 1. Will not take over budget or staff at this time. 7 member Exec. Committee - 3 elected, and 2 appointed from each city. Still, challenges remain.

25K calls/yr. for these two cities. By comparison, Chittenden County averages 150K calls/year.

6 + 6 dispatchers, 1 supervisor Montpelier, generally min. staffing 1 on duty. Becoming a PSAP adds training requirements and cost, and changes to call taking process. PSAP is best practice if can afford staff and training costs.

If have agency chiefs on Exec. Committee, might lessen challenges and increase buy in.

Running two facilities allows mirroring and continuity of operations if issues or problems arise at one location. Still need administrative backfill at each site.

Cost allocation: Barre Town voted down, Berlin SB would not bring to vote. Barre City and Montpelier approved at town meetings, then to legislature, approved and signed. MOU with City Councils for administrative costs; admin. funding formula based on population: Montpelier 53%, Barre City 47%. Started at \$75K, now \$100K total. Voters approved both years so far.

Dispatch funding model: Determined 33% of total cost for basic operations, with cost allocation based on population as above; then the other 66% of dispatch costs to be based on calls for service. But different revenues received by each. For now, each pay based on net cost... Still need agreement on defining "call for service".

Need for common, enhanced approach to fire operation dispatch, different than police needs.

July 1, 2018 hoped for start date. DWX report will include technical considerations. Managers will continue to work on governance; Chiefs work on technical issues. Transfer of PSAP from Shelburne to new entity essential to improved operational effectiveness. This will be on the E911 board agenda for January for conceptual consideration.

Hybrid model seen as important to help launch more quickly than PSA/legislative approach. Keep focus on improved effectiveness and efficiency, not primarily cost saving, even though may come over time...will likely also have better staffing and coverage.

Is it possible to remain under an RPC intermunicipal service agreement, but set up separate nonprofit to manage and run? Perhaps start with this, then expand into a separate authority if succeeds? Legal questions will be examined.

Greater Salt Lake unified policing model. Unify management first, then work together on technical and operational matters.

Aumand suggested that our approach to all of this is the right way to go.

We will get back to Deltawrx with information, and will schedule soon the draft and final presentations. Perhaps the draft presentation during the week of 1/23/17, with the final to follow soon thereafter, but with enough time for any late breaking changes or edits?

Respectfully submitted by Lee Krohn, AICP.

