

Joint Survey Committee for Chittenden County Public Safety Services

4/26/17 8:00-10:00AM

Colchester Town Hall, 781 Blakely Road, Colchester, VT

Meeting Minutes

1. Call to Order/Introductions

JSC Members present: Aaron Frank (Colchester), Darren Adams (Milton), Rick McGuire (Williston), Joe Colangelo (Shelburne), Kevin Dorn (South Burlington), John Audy (Winooski), Steve Locke (Burlington). Also Pat Scheidel (Williston), Irene Wrenner (Essex), Al Barber (Hinesburg), Andrew Bolduc (South Burlington), Ann Janda (Shelburne), Jesse Baker (Winooski), Dawn Francis (Colchester), Lee Krohn (CCRPC).

2. Agenda Approval

Motion by Colangelo to approve as presented; seconded by Adams and approved unanimously.

3. Public Comment

Irene Wrenner referenced a book about governance, Imperfect Union, suggesting that for this project to be accepted by voters, we must demonstrate clearly that a regional approach will outperform, not just outspend, the current, more localized systems. Her experience in these matters as a member of the Essex Selectboard was appreciated.

4. Approval of Minutes from 3/30/17

Motion by Colangelo to approve as presented; seconded by Adams and approved unanimously.

5. Actions – Organizational:

- a. Elect Chair/Vice Chair: Motion by Colangelo to elect Aaron Frank as Chair; seconded by Locke, and approved unanimously. Motion by Frank to elect Joe Colangelo be Vice Chair; seconded by Locke, and approved unanimously.
- b. Non-voting member from RPC: Frank requested that Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission Executive Director Charlie Baker serve as an Ex-Officio, non-voting member, with Lee Krohn of CCRPC as his alternate. The request was made in this manner, as only cities and towns legislative bodies which would be parties to a future union municipal district, if approved, have authority to appoint representatives to the Committee. OK by all.

6. Technical committee update/recap of site visit to Warren County, NY regional dispatch center

Locke offered a summary: it is a combined PSAP/dispatch center, serving Police, Fire, and EMS, with similar call volumes. Glens Falls is the largest municipality; total population varies widely, with summer events more than tripling the effective population served. It is typically staffed with four dispatchers, but rises to six or more at peak times. There is a separate dispatch center that can be run either as a redundant backup or simultaneously. There are supervisory and IT staff, with good oversight and methods of resolving grievances. Staff retention is not a problem. The trip was well worth the time.

Locke also described a visit to a dispatch center in Naperville, IL: roughly 150,000 residents, 100K Police calls/yr, 15K Fire calls/yr, 50K 911 calls/yr, operating with 4-6 dispatchers on duty, with capacity up to ten. 30 second response time from call taking to dispatch, all done on computer.

The technical group will meet on May 3 to debrief the site visit, and determine next work steps, likely including another site visit or two.

7. Update: Municipal Meetings

Colangelo, Francis, and Frank reported on various meetings attended with Charlie Baker. Although questions still remain, the reception has generally been very positive. It was learned that in more rural towns, dispatch contracts are sometimes with private nonprofits (Fire Depts, Rescue Squads) and not always with the municipalities.

8. Update: Communications with Dispatchers

No new information to report. It was suggested that Janda might touch base with Shelburne Dispatcher Tricia Vincent, who was on the site visit, to gain insights that might be helpful in future communications.

9. Update: Current Cost Compilation/Funding Metric/Calls

Frank reported that this effort is to document what we are doing and spending now, understanding we will have to develop future costs for regional dispatch, future costs for functions left at local PDs, and will need to benchmark future costs against current costs.

A draft summary was distributed of calls per municipality, derived from work with Managers and Police, Fire, and Rescue Chiefs. These current estimates suggest 20K or 16% more calls than identified by DELTAWRX. Important for levels of effort and revenue estimations. Asked for feedback from the Committee by 5/12.

Frank offered thanks to Tom Hubbard and Janice Ladd of South Burlington, who are part way through calculating current costs. Frank noted that RPC provided some metrics, but need to wait till we have future costs before running costs through funding any metrics.

10. Update: Union Municipal District Agreement (Charter) Drafting

South Burlington City Attorney Andrew Bolduc reviewed six changes of note:

1. Page 1 – Creation of a clear process for each Selectboard/Council to approve before warning for a vote in each community;
2. Page 3 –Clearer definitions of members and non-members (now “Contracting Municipalities”). During the collection of call information and the rural community meetings, it became clear that in many cases the contractor can be a private not for profit rescue or a fire department serving multiple municipalities, in which case the relationship may not be with a town but a public safety agency.
3. Page 4 – Clarified the director roles “shall be a municipal manager, mayor or their designee” and got rid of the appointment (unless there is a vacancy under Section 8).
4. Page 5, 6 – Removed Section 12 and instead added “at-will” language to the Secretary and Treasurer positions.

5. Page 7 – Amendment as requested that only Member directors would have control of the budget. This was changed back, as consensus was reached that all Directors (including the representative of the contracting municipalities) may vote on all matters, including the budget.
6. Page 10 – Added the language in 22(a) to require the legislative body approval of the Agreement prior to a vote to warn the meeting to join the Authority.

Frank asked Bolduc if a City or Town had to have a joint survey appointee to have a citizen vote on joining a union municipal district. Bolduc explained that for submission of an agreement to the legislative bodies and approval of the union municipal district agreement, the chapter of state statute authorizing union municipal districts refers to “participating municipalities” only. His reading of “participating municipalities” is only those municipalities that have appointed equal membership on the joint municipal survey committee, meaning, only municipalities that were represented on the Joint Survey Committee, could enter into the agreement through a duly warned meeting at its inception.

Bolduc was asked to try to get an informal opinion from the Attorney General on the draft agreement, so we can be clear whether we’re working toward an approvable form and content.

11. Possible Executive Session: Real Estate – moved to end of agenda for convenience of the public.

12. Funding & Expense Report – no changes to report with existing funding. Contacts and efforts with legislators are needed if there is any chance of resurrecting the request for \$50,000 in matching funds from the State. Members were encouraged to contact their legislators. No grant prospects have been found to date; there may be opportunities next year.

13. JS Committee and Management Matters and Communications

Concerns remain on the Police side regarding levels of service currently provided/received, and how and whether that service would continue in a regional dispatch construct. Are there opportunities for peer to peer conversation with existing regional dispatch centers to learn first-hand about these questions about levels of service? Police Chiefs still working to define all tasks currently provided by Dispatchers, and which of those must be kept. Other questions include whether those currently providing 24/7 staff for business/non-emergency matters should still provide that; and either way, how other tasks desired or needed may be provided and funded locally once regional dispatch is implemented.

A radio frequency coordination study is now underway in a federal program.

Next field trip TBA, once the technical group has met. Barber mentioned a standing offer from Washington County, NY to host a site visit.

However this project progresses, a phased approach is thought most likely to succeed.

An updated task list was distributed. We know we still need to determine a cost-sharing formula; this will be helped when current costs are clearer. It was asked that meeting minutes from the JSC and the technical group be sent to everyone.

14. **Executive Session – Real Estate:** Motion by Frank that the Joint survey committee enter Executive Session for the purpose of negotiating or securing of real estate purchase or lease options, as authorized under 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(2), Executive Sessions; and for Lee Krohn, Ann Janda and Al Barber were also asked to. Seconded by Audy and approved unanimously.

Motion by Locke to exit executive session; seconded by Adams and approved unanimously.

15. **Next Meetings**

- a) Scheduled: Next Meeting Wednesday 5/24 8-10 AM Colchester Town Offices, Second Floor, Champlain Room
- b) Scheduled: Wednesday 6/28 8-10 AM Colchester Town Offices, Second Floor, Champlain Room

16. **Adjournment: Motion by Colangelo to adjourn; seconded by Locke and approved unanimously.**