

Joint Survey Committee for Chittenden County Public Safety Services

8/30/17 8:00-10:00AM

Colchester Town Hall, 781 Blakely Road

Draft meeting minutes

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 8: 10 A.M.

Present: Aaron Frank (Colchester), Joe Colangelo (Shelburne), Steve Locke (Burlington), Jessie Baker (Winooski), Kevin Dorn (South Burlington), Rick McGuire (Williston), Pat Scheidel (Essex); also Ann Janda (Shelburne), Al Barber (Hinesburg), Irene Wrenner (Essex), and Lee Krohn (CCRPC).

Agenda Approval: motion by Dorn to approve the agenda; seconded by Colangelo and approved unanimously.

Public Comment: Scheidel asked about the timeline and process for the draft charter. If a legislative body votes no on charter, is a Town/City vote still needed in March? Draft charter requires a legislative body to approve in order to advance to town meeting. This is a self-imposed restriction; the JSC cannot bring this directly to the voters, for if a legislative body votes no, then why try to go forward in that municipality? Even if yes and yes, for communities who desire to receive service later it could be several years before receiving service, as it still needs local legislative body approval for funding obligation/financial responsibility.

Approval of minutes of 7/26/17: Motion by Dorn to approve as submitted; seconded by Baker; discussion: Scheidel moved to strike reference to Charlie Baker's financial update, which was actually submitted after the meeting, and to include that here in the minutes of 8/30 for reference; seconded by Baker, and the main motion as amended was approved unanimously. For the record, the Funding & Expense Report from last month was that *municipal payments toward the \$50,000 have been received or will be received from all but one town. We are following up with that town to see if they intend to contribute. The current remaining available balance is \$36,852.* Krohn reported today that the last town has since contributed its share toward the project.

Technical Advisory Group Update: Locke reported that the group has not met since the last meeting, but discussion and negotiations continue between the City of Burlington and CAD vendors. There are practical and other considerations involved in process and decisionmaking, although the ultimate goal (for the City and for a regional dispatch center) remains a fully integrated CAD/RMS. Concern about this matter was expressed as the committee felt strongly that having a common CAD and RMS for the County was critical for effective fire/EMS and law enforcement--with or without regional dispatch. The committee asked if the Managers should reach out to the police chiefs on this matter and Locke replied that it needed some time to be sorted out among public safety leadership.

Frank referenced a memo distributed describing possible time savings in a consolidated dispatch center/system.

Communications with Public Safety Staff - Update: Janda reported that she recently sent an email update to all Shelburne dispatchers and police. Additionally, Colangelo and Janda have scheduled a meeting in early September to update dispatchers and interested police personnel in person.

Union Municipal District Agreement (Charter) Drafting/Funding Formula and MOU Drafting – Update on Municipal Input: All legislative bodies except Milton have met, and we have comments from legislative bodies and legal counsel. Milton will discuss next week, Frank will attend. Frank presented detailed comments and annotations from each municipality.

Essex: Clarify quorum as a majority of the whole Board, not just who is present; Should voting be weighted? How to handle potential disagreements? Will include disputes clause. Who are the “voters”? Fund balance policy of 15%...important? Might be good to have a policy...but not necessarily a charter issue. Essex uses fund balance in excess of certain amount to lower taxes; CCTA would put into reserve fund for capital expenses and avoided a tax increase to pay for local share of \$10M transit station. Who can petition for changes? Can Essex join later? It is up to each municipality to decide if and when to join, or decide to contract with the regional entity. Regarding a proxy: suggest allowing to present a position to the Board, but not have a vote – as distinguished from a permanent designee to the Board, which can be changed.

South Burlington Council OK with draft charter as presented.

Shelburne: Suggested two-year rotating terms for chair and vice chair. If needed, it was agreed to put in bylaws as an operational matter; not needed in a charter. Question whether the MOU might allow too much time before transitioning to the long-term cost-sharing formula. Can timeframe be shortened overall? True costs will take some time to discern. Cost savings questions always present; JSC agreed that we still need to focus back on service delivery improvements.

Winooski – Council generally OK with the draft, but would like to achieve savings sooner. The initial formula is constructed to use ongoing appropriations similar to current costs vs. pre-funding up-front labor costs of nearly \$500,000 which was pursued but dropped when no funding became available. Given this approach, prospective savings will not come initially. It was acknowledged that all municipalities subsidize each other every day... we are in the business of service delivery, not profit making... and the primary goal here is more effective service delivery. We have a path to provide better service and potentially save money, but we have to move forward to get there.

Colchester/Shelburne counsel: Clarify director responsibility; clarify voters and members.

Williston: Clarify majority voting. Most proposed changes more process and clarity than substantive content.

Burlington: Council’s primary question/change sought was weighted voting, if only for the budget, and only if a proposed budget exceeds the CPI by more than 1.5%. Consider weighting by call volume. Frank referenced Krohn’s research on voting procedures for other regional entities in the County, and distributed a table showing call volumes, %, and estimated costs based on that. If there were 100 votes distributed by call volume %, then each board member (including the member representing the contracting communities) would have a proportional number of votes, rounded to whole numbers. There was consensus to take this approach as described.

Burlington requested consideration that the MOU on funding be a named and attached appendix to the Charter a. The Joint Survey committee developed the Charter and MOU together for transparency, but the MOU is purposefully separate because: 1) it is part of a phase approach to moving forward with regional dispatch deemed necessary given the 50 year effort to do so, and; 2) it is more likely that it will need to be changed over time as the organization evolves (example was given of CCTA Charter basing costs on miles when primary costs became driver pay hours and challenge of changing charter stagnated change in service to the disadvantage of the member communities) There was a discussion of a section of the charter that requires an MOU to be developed after the charter is approved. There was a discussion that the charter could reference a general model for the MOU such as (cost/call volume). The end consensus was that the Charter could reference an attached MOU as an appendix but that the MOU would still be an independent document with its own change process and retain its requirement for legislative body approval prior to financial commitment and responsibility and receipt but after citizen the vote on charter itself.

Further questions/requests: move the timing of budget preparation back to October. Use of fund balance to reduce assessments if budget fails understanding that the dispatch center must still operate. Other technical/clarification

comments. Is a supermajority really needed to push money into a reserve fund? Consider as a policy or bylaw; not needed in a charter. Consider an advisory finance committee of municipal finance staff to assist in the early years.

Dorn asked if we really needed legal review yet again after these matters are considered and as appropriate, consolidated into a coherent document? May lead to ever more edits and changes... need to keep moving forward and vote on this. Concern was expressed about progress and deadlines for Town Meeting warnings/votes.

It was agreed by consensus to have Frank and counsel revise the draft to work in changes on budget voting and MOU attachment and consider and include municipal comments deemed appropriate and those to come from Milton, work with Burlington to address their concerns, and to keep making progress toward a JSC vote on a final draft of the charter at the meeting on 9/27. Give the AG advance notice to help smooth the path toward that required review.

Funding and Expense Report: covered above in discussion about the last meeting minutes.

JSC and Management Matters and Communications: McGuire described notice of the community justice grant decrease, and noted a regional effort to community justice may be in order to help better allocate scarcer resources.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 27 at 8:00 A.M. at Colchester Town Hall.

Motion by Frank to adjourn the meeting at 9:56 A.M.; seconded by Scheidel, and approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by Lee Krohn.