

Regional Dispatch Implementation Project

Technical Advisory Group Meeting

03/08/2017

Present: Steve Locke, Chair; Tricia Vincent, Doug Brent, Dan Manz, Jeffrey Barton, Al Barber, Jan Wright, Brad LaRose, Trevor Whipple, Justin Huzienga, Lee Krohn.

The meeting was called to order at 1400 hours.

Lists of current dispatching duties were created by several Fire Chiefs, and also by Burlington Police, South Burlington Police and Shelburne Dispatch. These are thorough and comprehensive, and will eventually need to be sorted out in several ways: wants and needs; what's essential and what can be done by other staff; what each community may find important to keep, or what, if anything, can be jettisoned.

Cost factors: Chief Morton has examined agencies; Glens Falls NY (Warren County) has a similar call volume, handling Police, Fire, and EMS. Good place for a site visit? 911 call volume in the 40K range... similar to Chittenden County, but still the ever-present question of defining "call for service" to analyze and understand comparable sized agencies. Lee will coordinate with Ken and the dispatch center, and send a Doodle poll to find a date.

Cost drivers beyond staffing: real estate/space/location, existing or needed infrastructure, central location, parking...

Other major cost drivers: consoles/furniture... roughly \$100K per position total startup – need new and consistent approach to these, can't borrow from existing dispatch centers with different systems. May need eight. Software licensing. As a PSAP under current approach for 911, state covers some costs. Maintenance agreements. Streamline frequencies/technology/channels? UHF BTV, SB, Colchester... all others on VHF. Good split? "Need to allow technology to be your friend". Can't consolidate too tightly... Essex and Colchester separated frequencies 20 years ago, due to needs/amount of radio traffic.

CAD software. DMV, NCIC license fees. Training. Insurance.

Will the new dispatch center do any remote work (monitor facilities, open FD doors? Needed/to consider? Yes, at least for officer safety. Alarm facilities in communities...questions to consider.

Fit up/hardening? Towers/repeaters/control stations. Phone system, redundant... copper and VOIP. Fiber? T1? SBPD: Level 3, BCN copper, Comcast VOIP. Existing SB tower 189'; might be able to handle some additional antennas.

Backup location/redundancy? Mothball/backup or partner with another entity already operating St. Albans, Lamoille County, VSP? South Burlington has an EOC at Public Works... could be backup in short term. Only needs to be dispatch center, can turn off PSAP temporarily if needed. May be better.

Need technical analysis regarding frequencies and equipment. Colchester and Essex PDs are digital/encrypted; South Burlington is open unless encryption needed. May be equipment costs, someone to analyze all frequencies and equipment... but may be premature before decide whether to go... Catch 22. Need to know costs, but that depends upon who's in...

Dispatcher matters: Colchester is down three dispatchers now; Essex has only 4 dispatchers, but uses other staff to fill in...low cost now, may be a big increase in cost for them. Williston in flux still with free VSP service, which may not continue much longer. Regional dispatch is easier to justify on a cost basis for the larger municipalities already spending considerable \$ for this essential service.

Would like to communicate with dispatchers...but don't have many answers yet... and any meetings or discussion must be handled properly under labor law. Desire for transparency in this process, but being transparent could create its own challenges, especially with the inevitable, understandable uncertainty at this time.

Agreed again to do a site visit to one or more comparable dispatch centers, learn what we can, including how they handle multiple PDs... very different than the fire service, where Shelburne, for example, already handles many fire departments.

Is Essex County, MA another prospect?

Get the tour dates rolling.

With no other business, the meeting adjourned at 1520 hours.

Respectfully submitted by Lee Krohn.