



MEMORANDUM

To: James Martin, County Manager

From: Dale Iman, City Manager

Date: August 28, 2007

Subject: EXPLORING OPTIONS FOR A CONSOLIDATED 911 COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM

As you know, the City and County Public Safety staffs have met on several occasions during the previous year to discuss plans for the 911 Communications System. Most recently, the City Fire Chief has been in discussions with the County EM, EMS and Medical representatives to review and address issues in the process for dispatching EMT-related calls to the City Fire Department. Both the City and County are currently researching potential funding streams for meeting their future public safety communications needs. Both the City and County also have been in recent discussions with the State Government on ways to best leverage the State's plan to expand the State's VIPER communications system to better meet local public safety communications needs.

At present, the City, County, PWC and several other local agencies either use or are planning to use the City's existing 800 MHz Radio System for their public safety communications needs. There are currently two public safety answering points within the County along with five emergency communications dispatching centers. It is my present expectation that the City Public Safety Chiefs will continue to work with the County and other agency staffs to make the best use of the existing system to meet the emergency service needs of the citizens in the community. I believe, however, based on past system and process reviews, that it is time for the City of Fayetteville and Cumberland County to seriously explore the options for establishing a consolidated 911 Communications System along with a consolidated dispatch center. I say this in light of the fact that other communities in the state and in the southeast region have successfully implemented consolidated 911 Communications Systems to their communities' benefit. Having a consolidated system here would offer the following major benefits to both our governments and to the community at large:

1. Significantly shortens the lines of communication between the emergency telecommunications professionals who provide emergency dispatch services for the City and County Public Safety Departments.
2. Provides the opportunity for better emergency communications coordination for emergency response events that cross multiple jurisdictions within the county.

3. Provides the opportunity to streamline and standardize various dispatch processes, thus reducing the amount of time for responding to citizens' emergency calls and potentially increasing the level of safety for emergency responders.
4. Provides the opportunity to avoid duplicative expenditures on certain redundant 911 Communications infrastructure items, such as telephone lines, fiber optic lines, office space, communications consoles and administrative / supervisory staff.
5. Potentially reduces duplicative staff efforts in researching funding opportunities for system expansions.
6. Establishes a single point of contact responsible for managing, maintaining and expanding the 911 Communications System and for leading, managing and developing the 911 Communications staff.
7. Demonstrates the continued collaboration between the City and County governments, especially in light of efforts to market Fayetteville-Cumberland County as the preferred community to those relocating to our area as part of the BRAC initiative.

As the City and County have successfully done with Parks and Recreation, Human Relations, Tax Collection and the Storm-water Utility, I believe this is an opportune time to explore the possibilities for establishing a consolidated 911 Communications System. Per discussions with the City Fire and Police Chiefs, I note that they both support further exploration of this concept. I look forward to discussing with you in the near future your thoughts on pursuing this opportunity.

Sincerely,



Dale Iman,
City Manager

cc: Stanley "Vic" Victrum, Assistant City Manager
Chief Bergamine, FPD
Craig Hampton, City Special Projects Director
Chief Nichols, FFD
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