9-1-1 Call-Taking/Dispatch Services Working Group

Meeting #6

Capitol Plaza Hotel
100 State St, Montpelier, VT
Floor 3, Rm #338

Tuesday, 20 December 2016
10:00 - Noon

10:00 – 10:10
- Call to Order & Roll Call
- Approval of Minutes from 11/15/2016

10:10 – 11:45
- Discussion of Dispatch/Call-Taking Issues and Draft Report

11:45 - Noon
- Public Comment/Questions
- Establish Next Meeting Date and Adjournment

9-1-1 CALL-TAKING/DISPATCH
SERVICES WORKING GROUP
General Meeting #5

15 November 2016
Cap. Plaza Hotel, 100 State St., Montpelier, VT – Room #335

10:00 AM – Call to Order
Chair Gary Taylor brought the meeting to order. The following were in attendance:

Working Group Members Present
VT Enhanced 9-1-1 Board Representative: Chief Gary Taylor, Working Group Chair
VT Ambulance Assoc. Representative: Jim Finger, President (via conference bridge)
VT League of Cities & Towns (VLCT) Representative: Gwynn Zakov (arrived after roll call)
VT Sheriff's Assoc. Representative: Sheriff Roger Marcoux
VT State Employees Assoc. (VSEA) Representative: Sarah Copen (arrived after roll call)
VT Assoc. of Chiefs of Police Representative: Chief Leonard Stell
Office of EMS/Injury Prevention Representative: Chris Bell, Working Group Vice-Chair
Dept. of Public Safety Representative: Captain Tom Hango

Enhanced 9-1-1 Staff Members Present
Barbara Neal, Executive Director
Soni Johnson, E9-1-1 Board Clerk

Others Present
Paco Aumand, Executive Director, Central VT Public Safety Authority
Chief Seth DiSanto, Newport Police Department (via conference bridge)
Lee Krohn, Chittenden County Regional Planning
Chief Steve Locke, Burlington FD
Stephen Whitaker, Member of the Public

Approval of Minutes
9/27/16 – *Motion: Chief Marcoux made a motion to accept the minutes as written; 2nd by Chief Stell.*
Discussion: Captain Hango asked that the minutes be amended. On page two, "What benefits would DPS see if it stops dispatching for those 105 towns?"; towns s/b changed to "agencies".
There was no further discussion and the minutes from 9/27/16 were approved (as amended above) by unanimous voice vote.

Business
- Discussion of Dispatch/Call-Taking Issues and Draft Report – A first draft of the working group's report to the legislature was made available to working group members prior to this meeting. Chair Taylor asked all working group members for their thoughts on the draft report.
    - Some of the Department of Public Safety numbers are incorrect. Corrected information will be sent to Exec. Director Neal for inclusion in the next draft.
    - Department of Public Safety has stopped accepting payment from the five towns/agencies which were previously paying for services. DPS has done this to "level the playing field" until the dispatch issue is resolved.
    - Commissioner Keith Flynn has declined to provide a fee structure to the working group at this time. If the legislature wants them to do so DPS can put that information together for them when requested.
    - The working group had previously asked for a letter detailing what DPS would and would not provide. The Department of Public Safety is not prepared to supply a letter, but there are agreements in place that they will honor.
    - The Department of Public Safety is still interested in getting out of dispatching on the local level and only dispatching for State agencies.

DRAFT 1

- The Department of Public Safety is not taking on any new agencies at this time.
- The wording of Act 118 suggests that the legislature would like to be provided with specific cost/fee information. What will the response be if the working group doesn't provide the legislature with a fee schedule from the Department of Public Safety?
- The working group should add what fee info they have to the current report so the legislature will have some idea of what is out there.
- If Department of Public Safety can provide numbers if the legislature asks them to, why can't they provide them to the working group?
- The report should provide more information of the impact on municipalities if changes are made to current dispatch services (whether DPS ceases to provide those services or starts charging for them). Towns need as much information as possible to be able to plan for any changes. There are many different variables for them to consider (budget schedules, funding, technology needs and challenges, geographical issues, etc.).
- Department of Public Safety should stay in the dispatching and 9-1-1 call-taking business.
- Everyone pays already…either by taxes paid into the general fund or by separate arrangements. Some communities feel they pay twice because they do both.
- If the working group doesn't have a fee structure from DPS it seems disingenuous to include other agency fees in report.

➢ *Motion – The working group's report to the legislature will reflect the position of Commissioner Keith Flynn, that the Department of Public Safety is not interested in providing dispatch services for any further agencies at this time, would prefer to work with communities to eliminate dispatching for municipalities, and will not provide numbers for a fee structure as requested.*
Moved by Sheriff Marcoux; 2nd by Chief Stell.
Discussion: Jim Finger asked that the motion be repeated. He then suggested it be added that the Department of Public Safety has stated they will not see any cost savings if they cease dispatching for non-state agencies. It was decided that the motion would be voted on as originally stated, and could then be amended as necessary.
There was no further discussion and the motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Further discussion: It was determined that more detailed information be added to the report concerning dispatch funding disparities. Some communities feel that they pay twice; once with taxes and then again for their separate dispatch agreements. It was also suggested that the report clearly state that the Department of Public Safety has suggested that they will not reduce staff or see any savings if they cease dispatching for non-state agencies.

<u>Public Comments/Questions</u>

Stephen Whitaker:

- The credibility of the working group hinges on them providing a useful report to the Legislature. The Department of Public Safety should be held accountable and should be required to provide the requested information; he could get funding information from them through a FOIA request.
  - Group Comment: Existing public records can be requested from DPS, but the working group cannot force them to create documents.
- The working group shouldn't base its recommendations on current funding, but should start with a blank slate and figure out what is needed.
- The working group should also consider that next year the Governor is going to have to decide to opt-in/opt-out in regards to First Net. If they partner with a carrier in Vermont it might be possible for some towns to enter into agreements to use their towers.

Paco Aumand:

- Public Safety fees – It is possible to obtain budget information from them, but why would DPS put together a fee schedule if they want out of dispatching?
  - Group Comment: Broad figures are available, but those figures are not broken down in such a way as to be able to determine the true cost of providing dispatching services.
- Draft report – The report should address 9-1-1 call-handling costs. The Kimball report talks mostly about the efficiency of the single-stage call process. The current model has evolved to the point where

DRAFT

dispatching now subsidizes the call-handling function. Could call-handling, as a stand-alone function, be paid for solely out of the USF?

- Group Comment: Language can be added to the report to provide further information on 9-1-1 call-handling costs.

Next Meeting Date & Adjournment

It was determined that the next Working Group meeting would be held on Monday, 12 December 2016. The meeting will take place in Montpelier (location tbd).

Motion: There being no further business, Chair Taylor entertained a motion to adjourn; move by Sheriff Marcoux; 2nd by Gwynn Zakov. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously by voice vote. The meeting adjourned at 11:26 AM.

Respectfully submitted:

Soni Johnson	11/23/16
Soni Johnson, Clerk	Date

DRAFT 1