

Dover City Council Workshop
Regionalization of Dispatch Service
August 4, 2010

REGIONAL DISPATCH RESEARCH COMMITTEE

PRELIMINARY REPORT – APRIL 2009

Unresolved Issues To Be Considered or Studied

STAFFING

- The preliminary report estimates 21–28 full time staff would be required. Need a specific number to gauge the exact costs and savings from those costs
- The preliminary report does not appear to include a professional communications manager. An experienced professional manager would be recommended. This individual would be required to hire, supervise, train, discipline, and to be a point person for police and fire chiefs. A staff of 21-28 full time employees is more personnel than most police departments in the county.
- Should a dispatch supervisor be required to be on duty in the dispatch center, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week?
- The Dover Police Department would need to hire a full time clerical person to replace loss of work currently done by the on-duty dispatchers. The clerical person would need to be hired at approximately 35 hours per week to make up for lost productivity.
- There is a philosophical difference with regards to having a person at the police department to receive citizens entering the police facility after hours. The preliminary report recommends a telephone in the lobby which an individual can pick up. Dover staff recommends having an individual in the building 24 hours a day to receive citizens.
 - *This goes towards quality of service
 - *This person can serve citizens, on many occasions directly, so that an officer does not have to be called into the police department for issues such as found property.
 - *Person needed for security and safety. Quite often people come to the police facility in need of medical attention, or they're involved in an in-progress domestic dispute
- Would need to resolve how dispatchers are hired, trained, supervised and disciplined.
 - *With loss of local control this becomes an important issue

CAPITAL COSTS

- **Stand Alone Facility For Dispatch**
 - *Size of facility?
 - *Location of facility?
 - *Cost is currently unknown
- **Compare Cost Savings in Conjunction With Construction of Dover Police Facility**
 - *Savings from not having to include a dispatch center in the new facility
 - *Or, alternatively, combining regional dispatch center into the new facility
- **Radio Communication System**
 - *Cost estimate is \$700,000

*Dover communications system will need to be replaced within the next three or four years at an estimated cost of \$120,000

- **Management Information System**

- *Dover Police and Fire would have to change from QED (Queues Enforth Development) to IMC (Information Management Corporation)

- *Cost estimate is \$230,000 which includes purchase of software, migration of data from one system to another and training for all employees

- Note:* Dover Police and Fire currently uses QED as its software package to operate all aspects of dispatching, report writing, report retention, arrest data, prosecution management, case management, and statistics. A change to IMC, which is used by most police departments in the area and the county, would be a major change in operations. A change to IMC has already been studied by city IT staff who have concluded that QED is a superior product. QED was a start-up company and the Dover Police Department was a beta site. The system was designed with the needs of Dover in mind, whereas IMC is a package developed on its own with input from other cities and towns.

- **Other costs**

- *Remote video outfitting will be needed so the county can monitor the booking area, temporary detention area and other areas of the police department and fire department

- Cost Unknown

- *A security upgrade for the police department will be needed if it is determined that the facility will be unmanned on a twenty-four hour basis

- Cost Unknown

Total Capital Costs – Unknown at this time

OTHER CHALLENGES AND UNRESOLVED ISSUES

- In-house alarms and video monitoring

- *Currently Dover Dispatch monitors all city and school alarms, which saves several thousand dollars per year in outside vendor alarm fees

- Dover Dispatch can monitor city and school owned property via video

- Dover Dispatch monitors city hall panic alarms

- Thousands of routine calls received from the public and from outside professional agencies on a monthly basis. The calls need to be routed to proper personnel, messages need to be received and return phone calls must be made pertaining to citizens' cases, court hearings, and other routine day-to-day business telephone calls.

- In 2009 3,158 citizens were served in the lobby of the police facility after hours for various reasons as mentioned previously, to include medical and in-progress domestic disputes.

- Dover dispatchers are trained to take reports and complete them in their entirety, thus avoiding police officers having to respond to the facility. Examples include found items such as wallets, bicycles and other property, as well as citizens providing information to the dispatcher.
- Dover dispatch assists our officers with arrest packet information, thus saving the officers time
- Dispatchers answer Dover Crimeline and complete a report
- Dispatchers receive and distribute all faxes and domestic violence petitions. Would a police officer be required to drive to the county dispatch, thus taking officers off the street to receive these items?
- Dover dispatchers know and understand Dover Community Service personnel, notification system for routine calls, such as pothole notification and emergency notifications, such as broken water mains and other hazards
- Dover dispatchers are trained to function in the Emergency Operations Center (EOC). They respond directly to the EOC in order to assist with major city emergencies
- Dover dispatchers are part of the regional tactical team and can respond to tactical situations
- Dover dispatchers have intimate knowledge of all specific fire-related procedures and how the Dover Fire Department want their personnel dispatched and in what priority.
- Dover dispatchers have intimate knowledge of high liability police-related situations, such as pursuits. There are many policies that the Dover dispatchers need to know specifically so that they work in tandem with the command staff and officers on the street.
- Dover dispatchers issue winter parking passes after hours
- Dover dispatch assists with data collection and statistics, especially in regards to tracking police and fire response times, which are seen monthly in the City Manager report.

COST SAVINGS ON A YEARLY BASIS

- **There is a need for detailed estimates versus current cost**
 *FY11 total Police, Fire and EMS budget is \$652,683

PARTICIPATION OF OTHER CITIES IN REGIONALIZED DISPATCH CENTER

- Rochester?
- Somersworth?
- Other communities in Strafford County?

RECOMMENDATION

- **That the city engage a third party consultant to be assured that there is a thorough, unbiased and detailed evaluation of our needs and the capability of the County to provide dispatch services. The study would need to address any gaps in services and provide detailed cost estimates of all capital and staffing costs. The study would need to provide a detailed roadmap to transition from locally controlled dispatch centers to a county wide system.**