

PUBLIC SAFETY DISPATCH SERVICES STUDY COMMITTEE

October 24, 2011

The Dispatch Committee meeting was held in the Moose Hill Council Chambers, Town Hall, 268B Mammoth Road, Londonderry.

PRESENT: Committee Members: Steve Chasin, John Farrell, Linda German, John Velliquette, Ed Nolan, Steve Young, Lisa Whittemore, Captain Doug Cardwell; Alternate Committee Member Brendan Burns; Town Manager David Caron.

CALL TO ORDER

J. Farrell opened the meeting at 7:00 PM. J. Farrell outlined the events of tonight's meeting in that the Fire Department has a video presentation which will be followed by a question and answer session. The meeting will be adjourned from Moose Hill Council Chambers and the committee will do an on-site visit to the Londonderry Fire Department Dispatch Center.

OLD BUSINESS

Motion to approve the minutes made by E. Nolan, seconded by L. German, Committee's vote was 7-0-1. L. Whittemore abstained since she was not present at the previous committee meeting. No adjustments were made to the previous minutes.

J. Farrell has not yet approached the Town Council in regards to seeking an extension for the Committee if we cannot complete our objective by years end. He will speak with the Town Council about an extension if needed.

J. Velliquette presented a potential study sequence for the Committee to follow.

1. Study Londonderry Fire Department Dispatch:
 - A. Fire Dept presentation made to the Committee
 - includes all areas previously identified/discussed
 - question and answer sessions on the presentation
 - B. On-site observations- demonstrations at Central Fire Station
 - question and answers at LFD station

2. Study Londonderry Police Department Dispatch:
 - A. Same elements as above
 - B. On-site observations

-question and answer at LPD

3. Review of consolidation proposal with the Town of Derry
 - A. Discussion to include review of all related data previously collected/submitted
 - B. Determine next steps

E. Nolan mentioned that he would like clarification on the professional dispatch organizations that were mentioned in the reports such as APCO. He would like to possibly have a representative from the Fire Academy explain different fire dispatch certifications.

J. Velliquette suggested that the Committee re-evaluate the previous studies done by the Londonderry Fire Department and Londonderry Police Department. He felt that there was a lot of work done by those who studied the consolidation proposal and that we need to read through everything and weigh out the pros and cons.

Committee discussed possible on-site visit to the Derry Fire Department and L.German asked if we had to decide today since we had a lot of material to go over. J. Farrell recommended that the Committee decide by November 14, 2011 so that D. Caron has ample time to set up a visit before the holidays.

NEW BUSINESS

Capt. D.Cardwell presented a 10 minute video outlining the functions and different sections of the Londonderry Fire Department. The video was followed by a question and answer period with Capt. D. Cardwell

J. Farrell suggested that the Committee take into account the connection of Route 3 to Londonderry as well as the future development of Woodmont Commons and that the community will go through change in the future.

S. Young asked about staffing levels in previous years. Capt. D. Cardwell explained that in the 1980's the firefighters were doing the dispatching and that continued until 1996 when the fire dept took over emergency medical services. When LFD added emergency medical services they hired civilian dispatchers and placed the firefighter dispatchers on a fire shift. In 1990 there were 7 firefighters per shift and in 1996 that number increased to 10 firefighters per shift which is where it stands today.

B. Burns inquired if bordering towns would be willing to have Londonderry Fire dispatch them as part of a regional dispatch service. Capt. D. Cardwell explained that Auburn and Windham currently utilize Derry Fire for their dispatch services and are likely under a contract which would need further investigation. Litchfield Fire is currently dispatched by Hudson Fire who also provides the ambulance service. Capt. D. Cardwell explained that Litchfield is always looking for options and Londonderry Fire did dispatch Litchfield fire numerous years ago. The caveat of Litchfield is that Hudson Fire provides the emergency medical services, so if Litchfield agreed to consolidate with Londonderry for dispatch services, Londonderry would likely need to take over ambulance service in Litchfield. Manchester is large enough to handle their own dispatch services.

B. Burns then asked if Londonderry Fire can, at this time, handle additional dispatch services from neighboring towns. Capt. D. Cardwell explained that Windham currently uses the same software as Londonderry Fire and Londonderry Fire currently provides back up dispatch service to Litchfield Fire, so minimal upgrades would be needed at this time.

E. Nolan asked if Capt. D. Cardwell can go over the transmission statistics and dispatcher activities regarding a building fire in Londonderry in November, 2010. Dispatch activity of that incident were explained within the video presentation. Capt. D. Cardwell answered that the incident transpired over a period of 1 hour and 58 minutes in which 131 radio transmissions occurred. The number of incoming phone calls during that incident were 17 and there were 18 outgoing phone calls handled by the on duty fire dispatcher. Capt. D. Cardwell did explain that Londonderry Fire dispatchers use an echo system in which they repeat every incoming radio transmission, so for example, when an engine arrives on scene, the fire crew notifies the dispatcher and then the dispatcher repeats that the engine is on scene. That being the reason why the number of transmissions at the event were so high.

L. German cited that in a prior dispatch study report it was suggested that Londonderry Fire become as regional dispatch center for neighboring communities such as Litchfield and Windham. She wanted to know why Windham would transfer over to Londonderry if they are currently involved with Derry. Capt. D. Cardwell answered that Windham Fire was initially dispatch by the Windham Police Dept and 5-6 years ago switched to Derry Fire for fire service dispatch for financial reasons and that Windham maybe open to other options at this time.

L. Whittemore asked about possible implications of Londonderry Fire taking on other communities for dispatch services. Capt. D. Cardwell explained that Litchfield's call volume is 500-600 calls per year which equates to less than 2 calls per day which can be handled by Londonderry. He was unsure of Windham's call volume but stated that if Londonderry was to take on Windham and gain financially, then the money could be used to hire additional dispatch staff to handle an increase in call volume.

S. Young wanted the committee to take into consideration the new airport access road linking Route 3 with the airport. He feels that further discussion maybe warranted considering that the

road will have 3 exits in Londonderry and implied that the town will see significant increase in travel through the area.

ADJOURNMENT

L. Whittemore motioned to adjourn at 7:34 PM, seconded by E. Nolan, Committee's vote 8-0-0.

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