

**TOWN OF OLD ORCHARD BEACH  
TOWN COUNCIL WORKSHOP  
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 19, 2011  
TOWN HALL CHAMBERS**

**A Town Council Workshop of the Old Orchard Beach Town Council was held on Wednesday, January 19, 2011 in the Town Council Chambers. Chair Quinn opened the meeting at 7:01 p.m. The purpose of the Workshop was to discuss dispatch consolidation with Sanford, Maine.**

**The following were in attendance:**

**Chair Bob Quinn  
Vice Chair Michael Tousignant  
Councilor Robin Dayton  
Councilor Sharri MacDonald  
Councilor Shawn O'Neill  
Town Manager Jack Turcotte  
Assistant Town Manager Louise Reid  
Fire Chief John Glass  
Police Chief Dana Kelley  
Deputy Chief Keith Babin  
Technical Consultant Bill Botting  
Sanford Town Manager Mark Green  
Sanford Communication Director R. J. Leger**

**This Workshop was rescheduled from January 12, 2011 due to a snow storm that day and the purpose of the Workshop is to discuss dispatch consolidation of Old Orchard Beach Dispatch to the Sanford Regional Dispatch operation.**

**Town Manager, Jack Turcotte, began with a short history of the dispatch consolidation discussions that have been ongoing for over a year. During the 2010/2011 budget process operation the idea of combining our Dispatch operations with Scarborough began and continued until it was noted that the State of Maine announced a State plan to consolidate to PSAP centers into sixteen County locations and it became clear that Sanford would likely be the York County Center. Although Scarborough was Old Orchard's 911 dispatch center, Scarborough may be forced to relocate within Cumberland County. As a result of the State's announcement Mr. Turcotte indicated he shifted his consolidation focus to Sanford. The most challenging activity to this consolidation has been in the area of technology. The Town Manager indicated that we will need to install a microwave transmission system plus additional equipment requiring an up-front cost of approximately \$103,180 which would negate a majority of the savings for the first year; however the following years we would see a significant savings for the Town.**

**Sanford Town Manager, Mark Green, gave a little State history indicating that in 2003 the Maine State Legislature passed a bill requiring the Emergency Services Communications Bureau (ESCB) to reduce the numbers of remaining PSAPs from 48 to between 16 and 24.**

Currently the remaining 26 PSAPs in Maine handle calls by various methods. Some receive and dispatch 911 calls only for their municipality. Some receive and dispatch for multiple municipalities, and many receive and dispatch for multiple communities and transfer calls to dispatch-only locations. He also indicated that many felt that at the present time Maine currently has an emergency communications system (call taking or PSAP and dispatch functions) that are fragmented and dysfunctional. He indicated that the purpose of the Sanford Regional Dispatch Center is to provide citizens with an emergency system that balances cost efficiencies with public safety service. It is fully recognized that PSAP functions are only one component of the larger emergency communication system, including dispatch. He also stated that there must be a recognition that decisions regarding the configuration of the larger emergency communication systems must be based on both call taking and dispatch functions, rather than cost alone. It was also noted that there must be proactive plans for technology that will quickly become the new "standard of care" in the 911 industry called Next Generation 911 (NG911). Sanford commits to providing services that are as efficient and consistent as possible. Both Towns realize that NG911 will change emergency communications service delivery and implementation will require changes in how PSAP and dispatch services are delivered locally and regionally. Old Orchard would not be able to receive the benefits of the NG911 technology with our present existing equipment. Mr. Green reminded everyone that there is a cost associated with operating individual dispatch-only-sites and some PSAPs. The cost is not only financial but service related as well. Sanford presently handles many other municipalities including Acton, Alfred, Hollis, Lebanon, Limerick, Newfield, Shapleigh, Waterboro, North Berwick, Arundel, Kennebunk, and the York County Sheriff's office with a total population of approximately 231,029.

It was indicated that the upfront, one-time cost will be \$124,180 with an annual operating cost of \$15,064 for technology. Sanford is charging \$300,000 for an annual fee but added to that is \$15,064 for the cost of technology for a total annual cost of \$316,064. The annual savings for Old Orchard Beach will be approximately \$135,000 per year; over a five-year period the savings would be \$675,000. The Sanford fee will likely, from time-to-time, be subjected to increases due to new Federal and State mandated labor costs, etc.; however if we are to maintain our Dispatch program our cost will also be subjected to future annual increases for the same reasons. The safety net for Old Orchard Beach will be that we will not have to accept future increased costs independently as all the municipalities who use Sanford for dispatching will share in the future cost.

Sanford Town Manager, Mark Green, explained that when someone makes a 911 call they don't have to say a word on the phone or do anything. The dispatcher knows where they are and where they are calling from. Bill Botting, who serves as the technical consultant for both Old Orchard and Sanford, said that in the future advances will include the ability to send text messages and videos from cell phones to the 911 dispatcher. R. J. Legere, communications director for Sanford regional dispatch said that having the dispatch and the PSAP services in the same place will provide a more seamless transaction between the initial 911 call and dispatching to medical responders. This was in response to several concerns raised by Vice Chair Tousignant on the issue of their ability to serve but rather assurance that the microwave tower would be functional. Bill Botting reported on the technology required for Sanford to provide dispatch services to Old Orchard Beach and reported on the costs for both software and data communications. The software required includes additional modules and data conversion services for Information Management Communications (IMC) - the Police and Fire Dispatch and Records Management Software System. He also discussed the ability

to use Propalms Terminal Services software to allow Old Orchard Beach to continue to access IMC over the Internet in the event the primary data link fails. He indicated that the process that was gone through included comparing microwave with other means of data communication including Time Warner and GWI. It was decided that microwave is going to be used since it is less susceptible to weather events than the other solutions. Mr. Botting discussed the various paths that we might use to deliver a microwave connection between Sanford and Old Orchard Beach and the cost associated with each. Tower rental fees for the microwave equipment were discussed as these vary depending on which tower is used, and it looks like the most reasonable path in terms of lower tower rental cost would be to go from the Sanford Police Department Tower to Fort Ridge in Shapleigh, to the Water Tower in Old Orchard Beach, and then to the Police Station. Fort Ridge would be the only tower requiring a rental fee under this scenario. The Council asked Mr. Botting to contact the microwave provider to get an idea how long an engineering study of the microwave paths would take. The study would be about \$8,100 were part of the start-up costs. Vice Chair Tousignant felt that having the study done first would help determine if there would be any additional costs to the Town. Sanford Town Manager, Mark Green, explained that with the experience already culled by Sanford, he felt the cost would be as discussed with the Old Orchard Beach Town Manager. He assured the Town Council that there is no guess work with this and that this is going to work. He also indicated that the concern of waiting any longer for the approval of a contract puts into jeopardy the ability of the dispatch operations to be fully up to what they feel is necessary to handle the summer increased population and need for emergency responses that Old Orchard's population requires. During the discussions Councilor Robin Dayton presented many facts culled from the Report for Optimum PSAP Reconfiguration Assessment submitted to the State of Maine by Kimball in January of 2010. Old Orchard Beach Police Chief, Dana Kelley, and Deputy Chief, Keith Babin, encouraged the Council to move forward with this in a timely manner based on the fact that every day they are finding it harder to keep the dispatchers that they have and that fact that they are even having to use regular employees in the dispatch operation. They suggested that it is a nightmare to fill the shifts. Mark Green again explained that it would take about three months to get everything up and running. The questions was asked about how long was needed to inform Scarborough that we would be moving the dispatch operations to Sanford, and the Town Manager indicated there is a need for a 30 day notice. Some of the issues raised by Councilors were that question of whether this consolidation will actually save money; that more technology is required and that cost is not really known at this time; the question of whether the technology will work; questions about the differences in the training between dispatching services; and other questions related to the findings and recommendations of Kimball. Mark Green again confirmed their confidence in the program in existence at Sanford and that fact that many of these questions have already been addressed.

One of the issues that was raised by Councilor O'Neill who indicated he fully supports this move to Sanford and being done in a timely manner, was that there should be a legal agreement with Dan Patry on the use of the tower owned by him and his assurance that there is no cost to that use. Other questions raised by Councilors during the discussions included what will happed to the anemometer and Councilor Dayton indicated that would have to go back to Efficiency Maine at the end of their agreement with the Town. The question was also raised what happens if Sanford is not the chosen dispatch operation for York County and it was pointed out that this is the largest regional operation at this point and growing with the other interested municipalities asking to come on board at the present time. Sanford is anxious to grow the number to reduce the cost. The question of the length of the contract with

Sanford was discussed and the consensus seemed to be that five years was the appropriate time frame in which to address a contract. It was also indicated that the agreement would go on the next agenda after our legal counsel has had the opportunity to review. Chief John Glass indicated that this is something that needs to be moved forward quickly as the issue of coverage is a major concern.

During the evening the Old Orchard Town Manager reminded the Council that the fiscal year 2009-2010 budget for Old Orchard Dispatch was \$433,102 and the actual costs were \$450,355. The fiscal year 2010-2011 was cut by \$150,000 for a total budget of \$295,674. If we don't consolidate Dispatch we would have to budget \$457,090 for fiscal year 2011-2012 which would be \$23,988 more than the fiscal year 2009-2010. To this information Sanford Town Manager, Mark Green, indicated that Sanford's costs are controlled by a governing board made up of representatives from all of the municipalities participating in the regional operations, including the County and Sheriff's departments. Mark Green emphasized that the State has learned from the earlier dispatch consolidation process; prominent is the recognition that simply merging PSAPs can have unintended side effects and may not produce the anticipated savings. He indicated that Sanford has addressed the fragmented system that existed before.

Municipalities that have cut their emergency communication expenses have done so by consolidating their dispatch centers and have learned that this can lead to significant savings in personnel costs. Displacement of town employees was a concern expressed by Council but the fact that most of Old Orchard Beach's dispatchers have already found other employment and that those remaining have an opportunity to be hired by Sanford was given to relieve the concern. Mark Green indicated that they are always faced with the challenge of using tax dollars efficiently while making sure that citizens have the service they deserve.

In review of the contract which is to go to the Council on February 1, 2011, includes that Sanford agrees to furnish to the Town of Old Orchard Beach all qualified personnel, facilities and materials necessary to provide dispatch and Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) Services. The terms of the agreement will be five years but extension with the mutual consent of Sanford and Old Orchard Beach is agreed to also. Sanford will be responsible for any capital expenses that may be required to allow Sanford to provide communications services to Old Orchard Beach. There is a six month termination clause. Old Orchard Beach will have two representatives on the Sanford Regional Communications Advisory Board; a regular voting member and an alternate, serving a three-year term. This Committee will meet quarterly or more often, if necessary.

The meeting closed at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

V. Louise Reid  
Town Council Secretary

I, V. Louise Reid, Secretary to the Town Council of Old Orchard Beach, Maine, do hereby certify that the foregoing document consisting of four (4) pages is a true copy of the original Minutes of the Town Council Workshop of January 19, 2011.

V. Louise Reid