



CITY OF DUNWOODY
41 Perimeter Center East, Suite 250
Dunwoody, GA 30346
Phone: 678.382.6700 • Fax: 678.382.6701
www.dunwoodyga.gov

MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor and City Council
From: Warren Hutmacher, City Manager
Date: October 11, 2010
Subject: Enhanced 911 Emergency Communications Service Provision Update

BACKGROUND

As discussed with the Mayor and Council at the April, May, and July Work Sessions, since November 2009, the E-911 working group has researched options and opportunities available to the City of Dunwoody for enhanced 911 emergency communication services. Furthermore, I have worked directly with the City Council Emergency Services Committee to discuss service provision options with DeKalb County.

Since the July Work Session, we have continued discussions with ChatComm to prepare a preliminary Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA). We have negotiated an annual fixed price contract for services at a cost of \$1.2 million with an additional one time cost of \$570,000 due upfront for transition and cutover expenses. The annual price guarantees dedicated dispatch on a 24-hour basis. We have confirmed with ChatComm that Dunwoody will own all equipment purchased as a result of our addition to the center and that the purchase of such equipment does not alter our "subscriber" status, keeping the City free of future capital outlay contributions.

Additionally, we have confirmed the performance metric for call processing. Call processing is the time interval measured from the time a 911 call is answered, to the time the incident is available for dispatch to field personnel. For several months, the ChatComm Technical Advisory Council has been discussing distinguishing the performance metric for call processing for "high priority" calls. We have reached consensus that the performance metric and associated penalty provision for call processing of "high priority calls" be 90% in 60 (sixty) seconds or less. Furthermore, we have reached consensus that the call processing standard for all calls be 90% in 90 (ninety) seconds or less. Currently, ChatComm is exceeding both of these proposed metrics. The intent is for these standards to be applied evenly to Dunwoody, Sandy Springs, and Johns Creek. Until such time that Sandy Springs and Johns Creek adopt these proposed standards, language is included in the IGA

that stipulates that in instances where the Dunwoody-ChatComm Agreement differs from ChatComm's Agreement with its contractor, the shorter call processing times for "high priority" calls and all calls shall be enforceable thus ensuring our call processing standards remain uniform between the three cities.

With the assistance of the City Council Emergency Services Committee, I have also continued discussions with DeKalb County to bring forward a proposal for enhanced service provision from the County. DeKalb County has not yet provided a proposal or any further information about the possibility of either enhancing the service currently provided or the possibility of leasing space at the DeKalb center while utilizing our own personnel. The Public Safety Director was advised that Council would be meeting on October 11th and that their proposal was needed in advance of this meeting for Council to consider changes to the current service delivery model.

ANALYSIS OF ALTERNATIVES

At this time, three viable alternatives are available to the City of Dunwoody for the provision of enhanced 911 communication services: (1) direct service provision, (2) purchasing service from ChatComm, or (3) purchasing enhanced service provision from DeKalb County.

1. Direct Service Provision

Form a new 911 center in Dunwoody to provide 911 services directly to our residents and businesses

Benefits:

- Performance standards – answer 90% of all calls within ten seconds and dispatch 90% of all calls within sixty seconds
- Managerial control – highest degree of control

Challenges:

- Would require General Fund supplement if 911 service fee does not cover expenses; extent of supplement amount unknown
- City bears all financial risks including startup capital investment and future technology refreshes
- Managerial strain to balance current duties with standing up and operating a 911 center

2. Purchasing Service from ChatComm

Purchase 911 services from ChatComm while dispatching on DeKalb County's digital radio system

Benefits:

- Established, proven performance standards – answer 90% of all calls within ten seconds and dispatch 90% of all calls within sixty seconds
- Performance standards tied to financial penalties if not met
- Dedicated dispatcher position, 24/7/365
- Fixed total costs, fixed transition/cutover cost – managed financial risk
- Regular monthly and custom statistical reports as well as annual reports
- Automatic vehicle location (AVL), mobile computer terminal support including potential silent dispatch and integration of computer aided dispatch

- Identical Records Management Software (RMS) allowing enhanced data sharing
- Smart911: citizens can pre-register personal and family profiles, including cell phones, which become available to 911 operators and responding units at the time of an incident
- Enhances ability to partner with Sandy Springs on crimes close to municipality border, particularly in the Perimeter Center area
- Strengthens established partnership of the North Metro SWAT Team
- No long term commitment
- Subscriber status – City is not responsible for any cost overruns, revenue shortfalls or supplemental appropriation requests
- Significant managerial involvement as part of the Police and IT Technical Advisory Committees

Challenges:

- Premium cost for high level of service, may require a supplement to meet fixed monthly cost
 - Less autonomous managerial control
3. Remain with DeKalb County 911 with enhanced level of service
Pay an additional amount to DeKalb County to enhance the level of service currently received

Options Requested:

- A. Dedicated dispatchers and dedicated radio channel
- B. Lease space at center, staff with Dunwoody personnel to provide dedicated dispatch on a dedicated radio channel

As of the date of this memorandum, DeKalb County has not provided the City with a proposal, therefore this option is impossible to analyze.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends Council authorize the Mayor to sign the Intergovernmental Agreement with ChatComm, subject to final review by the City Manager and City Attorney. After final execution of the IGA by all parties, staff recommends providing DeKalb County with required 6 month notice for termination of E-911 services.