

Minutes of October 21, 2005 Meeting
North-East King County Regional Public Safety Communications Initiative
Steering Committee

Attendance:

Stan Aston, Kirkland Police	Rosemarie Ives, Redmond
Jeff Blake, Kirkland Fire	Alan Komenski, Bellevue Police
Denny Bronson, Bellevue Police	Marcus Kragness, Shoreline Fire
Diane Carlson, Bellevue CMO	Joel Kuhnhenh, Woodinville Fire
Jane Christenson, Redmond	Walt Mauldin, Mercer Island Fire
Forrest Conover, Bothell Police	Jim Montgomery, Bellevue Police
Brenda Cooper, Kirkland	Mark Nelson, ADCOMM
Stan Conrad, Issaquah Police	Dave Ramsay, Kirkland
Gene Markle, Kirkland Police	Karen Reed , Consultant
Mike Eisner, Bellevue Fire	Wes Collins, EFR
Ron Elsoe, Mercer Island Public Safety	Tom Weathers, Northshore Fire
Tim Fuller, Redmond Fire	Ron Zsigmondovics, Bothell Fire

The meeting was called to order at 9:10, with attendee introductions. The minutes of September 16 were approved without change. On housekeeping items, Mark Nelson noted that there is still an effort to find a time for a joint subcommittee meeting (Fire/EMS, Police, Technology/Facilities/Operations) and ValleyCom. The November 4 date offered by ValleyCom will not work for some participants; Tracy Burrows and Mark will work to identify another time, prior to the November 18 Steering Committee meeting.

No staff communications items were noted by members. Dave Ramsay provided a quick update of the October 20 EPSCA board meeting on the subject of potential linkage between 800 MHz service to the regional dispatch effort. No decisions were made at the meeting, but it was a positive first discussion. Next steps are for the consultant team to identify issues for EPSCA to consider relating to merging of the two operations to report to the EPSCA board at its next meeting, December 8. Chris Fischer of ValleyCom is also being invited to that meeting to discuss how in her perspective the two services, dispatch and 800 MHz, dovetail into a single operation.

Results of the recent interviews with dispatch employees at Kirkland and Bellevue were summarized by Karen Reed and Mark Nelson. A written document will be forthcoming. All employees expressed concern about their own employment future should a regional agency be created: what would happen to their seniority? To their benefits, particularly MEBT? Would they have to reapply for their jobs? Most expressed a desire to have a dispatch operation managed by persons with career dispatch experience, rather than be part of a police department, although some noted that they enjoy being part of the department and working directly with the officers. Most expressed a desire to have more information and opportunity for input on the regional dispatch project. Bellevue staff all identified the value of being cross-trained and cross-deployed, both in terms of the level of service they were able to provide as individuals, and in terms of the value to employees of having a greater variety in their work and opportunity for advancement. The dispatchers are proud of the service they provide and want to provide the best possible service to the public. Some, but not all, identified regionalization of dispatch as a clear benefit in terms of better public safety service delivery.

The proposal for creation of Human Resources Committee was approved after discussion. Participants noted concerns that these issues be addressed with caution, and the Committee is not being empowered to develop or negotiate a set of benefits or labor conditions. Dave Ramsay was nominated to serve on the committee, together with Bill Kenny (Kirkland HR), Pam Heide (Bellevue Dispatch). Forrest Conover and Stan Conrad offered to provide representatives, as did Mayor Ives. Leslie Burns from Mercer Island will serve; she oversaw the recent transition of the Mercer Island dispatch operation to Bellevue and Kirkland. Karen will follow up to schedule a meeting for this new committee. Cities with dispatch operations also offered to identify staff who could serve as resources to the committee on an as needed basis. The group agreed that ongoing communications with staff is critically important as the project proceeds.

On behalf of the Executive Committee, Dave Ramsay noted the committee is grappling with schedule issues and defining subcommittee deliverables, both of which will be discussed later on the agenda. Each of the four subcommittees provided reports.

For the Police Dispatch subcommittee, Gene Markle, Kirkland Fire, noted he is assuming Greg Edwards chair position, as Greg has recently retired. Among other items, Gene noted that the committee thinks that based on their observations at ValleyCom, the cross-trained dispatch staffing model deserves careful consideration. He also noted that the group anticipates that existing dispatch operations will not be reimbursed for technology systems mothballed when agencies join the new regional operation. He noted a growing consensus around a records role for the new agency, but that technical issues need to be worked out.

For the Fire Dispatch subcommittee, Chief Fuller noted that they have gone as far as they can without the joint subcommittee meeting. The fire representatives agree they want access to a common records management system.

For the Technology/Facilities/Operations committee, Brenda Cooper noted that there is a recommendation later on the agenda. Her subcommittee too is anxious to see the joint subcommittee meeting occur.

Marcus Kragness reported for the Governance and Finance Subcommittee. The proposed governance approach is on the agenda today. A fee proposal and transition plan are also prepared for discussion next month. Marcus notes that forward progress on the project will stop unless funding is blended into the next biennial budgets of cities which will be prepared and adopted in 2006; he anticipates that the ILA should be signed by mid 2006, so that transition work towards a new agency can begin (unclear how many years that transition would take).

Mark Nelson reviewed a summary matrix identifying generally the “deliverables” and due dates for each subcommittee.

Karen Reed presented the work of the governance and finance subcommittee on a proposed governance approach. Issues referred back to the subcommittee for further consideration include: (1) further definition of latecomer capital obligations; (2) membership on the joint operating board of technology staff of participating jurisdictions; (3) use of a biennial budget, rather than an annual budget, but with fees adjusting annually; and (4) whether the agency should automatically terminate if the number of principals dwindles below a certain level.

Karen noted that the governance and finance subcommittee is recommending augmenting their group with some finance staff from participating jurisdictions on a short term basis for the

purpose of reviewing and refining the fee proposal. The group agreed with this idea. Karen will follow up to schedule a meeting with the larger group.

Brenda Cooper presented the recommendation from the Technology/Operations/Facilities subcommittee that the agency should use a single integrated CAD, RMS and MDT system. She noted that this recommendation does not compel use of a single vendor. The steering committee adopted the recommendation. Brenda noted that in the subcommittee deliberations Kirkland and Bellevue staff talked about having no expectation that they will be reimbursed for sunk investments of their individual CAD/RMS systems. It was also noted that King County is pursuing implementation of a single unified regional records system for medic operations.

Mark Nelson presented a table of comparative information about three recently constructed regional dispatch centers: CENCOM, ValleyCom and Spokane County. The table showed parallel information (to the extent available) for the Zone 1 area. At the next meeting, Mark will bring back info regarding current staffing for these centers, and refined population numbers from PSRC.

The group then looked at a handout on the schedule for the balance of the year and on into 2006. It was noted that facilities pricing information, particularly from Bellevue, will not be available this year in order to fully complete the anticipated scope of work. One approach would be for the governance interlocal agreement (ILA) to be completed and individual participants sign letters of intent stating that if the remaining pricing information is acceptable, they will sign the ILA. Hopefully, the facilities information can be completed in the first quarter next year so that continuation of the project can be built into the cities' biennial budget deliberations (2007-08). The group will revisit this schedule and process issue at the next meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 10:50 a.m.