

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

Attendance:

Jeff Blake, Kirkland Fire	Rosemarie Ives, Redmond
Denny Bronson, Bellevue Police	Alan Komenski, Bellevue Police
Tracy Burrows, Kirkland	Joel Kuhnhenh, Woodinville Fire
Diane Carlson, Bellevue CMO	Walt Mauldin, Mercer Island Fire
Jane Christenson, Redmond	Lee Soptich, EFR
Rich Conrad, Mercer Island CMO	Mark Nelson, ADCOMM
Brenda Cooper, Kirkland	Dave Ramsay, Kirkland
Gene Markle, Kirkland Police	Karen Reed, Consultant
Mike Eisner, Bellevue Fire	Rick Gaines, EFR
Tim Fuller, Redmond Fire	Ron Zsigmondovics, Bothell Fire

The meeting was called to order at 9:05, with attendee introductions. The minutes of October 21 were approved without change.

No staff communications items were noted by members.

The Law Enforcement, Fire/EMS, and Technology/Facilities/Operations Committees reported out on their joint meeting. The Joint Committee has scheduled a Tabletop Exercise for the afternoon of December 12th. The purpose of the Tabletop is to compare how the dispatch flow of calls would work under a new operational idea of having one dispatcher handling an incident versus the traditional method of having separate fire and police dispatcher for the same incident. This would be incident-driven dispatch versus functional workload management dispatch. The Tabletop would explore the staffing requirements for the proposed configuration of dispatch because they would most likely differ from the current staffing requirements.

Brenda Cooper, chair of the Technology Committee, confirmed the decision that the agency should use a single integrated CAD, RMS and MDT system. The records systems may be different for fire than for police. The agency could choose to host the technology, or not. She noted that this recommendation does not compel use of a single vendor. Brenda also noted that while it should be possible to leverage existing technology investments, it would be preferred to cost out the technology for the Dispatch Center as if buying a new system. There may be several different cost scenarios, with different assumptions as to the number of participating agencies. The technology decisions for this phase of the project are complete. The more detailed facilities decisions cannot be finalized until the results of the Tabletop Exercise are in.

David Ramsay reported that a group of Finance representatives had reviewed the approach to dispatch fees and had concluded that there were no fatal flaws in the methodology. Once the real cost estimates for the center are developed, then the fee methodology will be tested out to see how it works in practice.

Brenda Cooper reviewed the Facilities Criteria that were developed in coordination with Mark Nelson and the Facilities Subcommittee. The criteria were categorized as either: "Must Have" (essential no matter what the location); "Very Important" (required in a permanent facility, and highly desired in an interim location); and "Important" (nice to have, high on the list but willing

to sacrifice in light of other more important features.) Brenda said that it appeared that the Bellevue City Hall site met the “Must Have” requirements, but that the Committee was still checking on a couple of the criteria.

Dave Ramsay suggested that “meets essential building requirements” be added to the “Must Have” list. The group also requested that the source for each of the criteria should be noted in the document. Jeff Blake noted that it seemed that there may be some additional criteria that should be placed in the “Must Have” category. There was discussion about the need for a cost/benefit assessment of the criteria. Also, there was a distinction made between “Must Have Now” and “Must Have in a Permanent Facility.” Brenda requested that suggested changes to the criteria be submitted to her before the December 16th meeting.

(?? I'm not sure who did this but Mark was in Hawaii....I think I may have introduced it, in Mark's absence) introduced a discussion of the number of dispatch consoles that would be needed by the new agency. The biggest open question that remains is how many police agencies will be participating in the agency and whether or not a specific agency requires dedicated consoles. There was interest in the question of what the Level of Service differences were if you did not have a dedicated console. Rich Conrad stated that Mercer Island had recently transitioned from dedicated consoles to shared consoles. The efficient method of allocating consoles is to follow industry standards for calls per dispatcher. From the anticipated total number of calls, you can build dispatcher requirements.

The Tabletop Exercise will help determine whether an operational change in the way to do dispatch will or will not work. If it works, we apply the new model to determine the number of consoles needed. If it doesn't work, then we will work within the model we have. Given the interest in the topic, it was agreed that there would be a focus on operating issues at the December meeting. Rich Conrad urged the group to think regionally. The operations of the agency should capture economies of scale in order to achieve a higher level of service and save money.

Karen Reed led the discussion of the Transition Plan. To complete the Phase I work plan, the consultants will develop 3-4 cost scenarios based on assumptions about level of service and participating agencies. In February, the participating cities and fire districts should be checking in with their councils, which may or may not involve signing a letter of intent to participate. The anticipated date for signing the Interlocal Agreement (ILA) is mid-2006.

Once the ILA is signed, there is a list of tasks that must be accomplished, including creating the governance board, issuing the technology RFPs, and coordinating staffing (including incentives to keep existing staff in place during the transition.) Transitional costs may include costs of consulting assistance, Executive Director salary, and other transition expenses. Mayor Ives suggested that it will be more expensive to operate regionally with a higher level of service. Rich Conrad noted that the costs of the regional agency should be compared to the cost of doing business in our existing dispatch configuration, which will also require new investments as time goes on. Rich expressed the concept that if the agency makes good, sensible decisions about operations, then we should be able to accomplish a regional level of service for the same or less as current operations.

Karen Reed briefly reviewed the weighted voting scenarios.

Karen Reed reviewed the Conceptual Fee Approach. It was developed with the following principles (consistent with the operating values of the agency): transparency; pay for the costs that you are responsible for; minimize cost spikes; and, recognize the contributions of the

principals. The fee formula does not currently incorporate costs of hosting the RMS system. If that choice was made, the formula would have to be amended. Also, if the operating method of dispatching is changed, the formula would change to reflect the new dispatching needs. Jane Christensen asked about how the formula treated the ratio of fire to police calls. Karen responded that the formula charges the actual separate costs of fire and police dispatch back to the participating fire and police agencies respectively. In that way, the fire agencies do not subsidize police dispatch, and vice-versa. If a new cross-disciplinary dispatching model is adopted, the fee formula would have to change.

The meeting adjourned at 10:50 a.m.