

MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 10, 2008

TO: The Honorable Chairman and Members of the County Commission
The Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Commission

FROM: Parwez Alam, County Administrator, Chair of the Public Safety
Communications Board 

SUBJECT: Public Safety Communications Board June 2008 Status Report

Background:

In April of 2006, the County, City, and Sheriff agreed to the creation of a joint dispatch operation for public safety agencies. The Joint Public Safety Dispatch System includes the Leon County Sheriff, Leon County Emergency Medical Services, Tallahassee Police Department, and the Tallahassee Fire Department.

The Leon County Board of County Commissioners, City of Tallahassee Commission, and the Leon County Sheriff authorized the creation of the Public Safety Communication Board (PSCB) as the oversight body for public safety communications. The PSCB also replaces the Management Oversight Committee (MOC), established an interlocal agreement on July 23, 1999 regarding the 800 Mhz system. The members serving on this Board are the Leon County Administrator, Chair, the Tallahassee City Manager, Vice Chair, the Leon County Sheriff, the Chief of Tallahassee Police Department, the Chief of the Tallahassee Fire Department, and the Chief of the Leon County Emergency Medical Services.

It is the goal of the PSCB to improve services to the public by more efficient handling of both emergency and non-emergency calls and more effective deployment of resources. Consolidating the dispatching of all law enforcement and emergency personnel is in the best interest of the health and safety of all Leon County and City of Tallahassee residents.

Radio Communications:

The current 800 MHz radio system has been in place since 1997 and is maintained by the City of Tallahassee. However, Leon County is a partial owner in the system and is required to share expenses relating to the maintenance of the radio system, project management salaries, and radio shop operating expenses for radio programming. The current system is quickly approaching its Motorola supported end of life. In December 2008, the City, County, and the Leon County Sheriff's Office will lose support of the current controllers (Prime and Remote Sites) that manage the system. The City has acquired adequate replacement parts that, if necessary, will be utilized to maintain the current system through the transition to the new system.

In December 2007, the Board of County Commissioners and the City of Tallahassee Commissioners voted to approve the contract with Motorola for the purchase of the new radio communications system and proceed with an interlocal agreement between the County, City, and the Sheriff's Office. The follow details the interlocal agreement, the contract with Motorola for

implementation and maintenance, and the current status of the implementation of the new system.

Interlocal Agreement with Leon County, the City of Tallahassee, and the Leon County Sheriff for the Management and Operation of the Digital Radio System:

The interlocal agreement was approved by the County Commission on December 11, 2007 and the City Commission on December 12, 2008. The agreement was finalized on December 20, 2008. The agreement provides for the following:

- The County/Sheriff and the City each have 50% ownership interest in the system.
- The cost to acquire the system is as follows: Infrastructure (ie towers, hardware, system software, etc.) is evenly divided between the City and County. Individual subscriber units (ie radios) and consoles are borne directly by the user.
- The System Manager is responsible for the overall day to day operation of the system. This is consistent with the current operation.
- Rebanding funds to be received from Nextel is calculated on individual subscribers and will be distributed accordingly to the City and County.
- The System Manager is responsible for making recommendations regarding the Standard Operating Procedures and a number of operational issues. The PSCB has final approval.
- The City currently owns the FCC licenses necessary to operate the radio system. The City will continue to own these licenses. At some point in the future, if the City desires to proceed with an alternative system and the County and/or Sheriff wish to maintain the digital radio system, sufficient licenses would be made available for such continued operation.
- The existing interlocal agreement governing the analog radio system will terminate Oct. 1, 2008.
- The County/City are each responsible for 50% of the maintenance costs.

Communications System Agreement with Motorola Inc. for the Joint Purchase of the Digital Radio System:

The total purchase price for the communications system is \$19,655,883; the County is responsible for \$8,986,999 and the City \$10,668,884. The contract includes a one-year warranty. Subsequent to the expiration of the warranty period, it is imperative that the system be properly maintained. To ensure the best maintenance pricing, staff negotiated the maintenance pricing as part of the overall contract process.

The contract was approved by the County Commission on December 11, 2007 and the City Commission on December 12, 2008.

Current Status of the Implementation of the New Radio Communications System:

The implementation and final acceptance of the communications system is schedule for June 18, 2009. Motorola is proceeding as schedule with the new tower at Tom Brown Park and with the additions to Hopkins Tower. The new tower at Myers Park will be relocated from its current location on the golf course to a more remote location within Myers Park. On June 17th and 18th, the two days of technical tests will be conducted and the City and County will certify the systems in order to approve the functional operation of the system in a test environment. The equipment

will be delivered a week later.

Florida State University, Florida A&M University, and Tallahassee Community College of all expressed their intent to participate in the new P25 digital communication system. These entities are currently working with Motorola to obtain the necessary equipment.

Location of the Public Safety Communications Center:

During May 2007, the Board of County Commissioners and the City of Tallahassee Commissioners voted to establish the property on the corner of Easterwood and Weems as the location for the joint dispatch facility and the Capital Area Chapter of the American Red Cross' administration buildings. The appropriate comprehensive plan and rezoning processes were implemented and approved.

On October 9, 2007, County and City Commission held a joint workshop on the comprehensive plan amendments. The County and City Commission indicated their support for the comprehensive plan amendment with the following conditions:

- 10.7 acres for the purposes of constructing the Joint Dispatch, Traffic Management Center, and the American Red Cross buildings.
- 5 acres for future expansion.
- draft an inter-local agreement between Leon County and the City of Tallahassee for the maintenance of the mountain bike paths on the remaining 26 acres.

On February 19, 2008, the inter-local agreement between Leon County and the City of Tallahassee for the maintenance of the mountain bike paths in Tom Brown Park was finalized.

Leon County and the American Red Cross are currently finalizing the lease for land to build the administration buildings of the Capital Area Chapter of the American Red Cross.

During the May 9, 2008 meeting, the PSCB directed staff to proceed with developing a scope of works for the purposes of issuing a request for proposals (RFP) for the program manager. The program manager would be responsible for the overall coordination of the programming, design, construction, start-up, and occupancy of the facility, oversight of the design and construction teams, and other program management duties.

The Director of Public Safety Communications:

The PSCB will be discussing the hiring process of Director of Public Safety Communications during the June 17, 2008 meeting.

As outlined within the job description and the Memorandum of Agreement, the Director will be responsible for the joint communications center and will meet all requirements of, and will perform all duties and obligations required of public safety communications director under, applicable law. In addition, PSCB will be responsible for the hiring of such a director and will ensure that at all times the Director is responsible for daily operation and supervision of all employees of the Public Safety Communication Center. The PSCB also determined that the Director can be terminated by the PSCB as a whole or by any one of the following:

independently: County Administrator, City Manager, or the Sheriff. The PSCB unanimously approved the job description.