

MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 8, 2006

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 September 2006 Status Report

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 July 23, 1999 agreement 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.

Since its inception, the PSCB has been meeting on a regular and consistent basis. The PSCB has agreed to annually select a Chairman and Vice-Chair. Additionally, the PSCB has agreed to meet on a regular basis. All meetings are publicly noticed by the Leon County Public Information Office. In addition, the agendas and minutes for the PSCB meetings can be found on the Leon County website.

On August 25, 2006 the PSCB recommended that a status report highlighting the progress made by the PSCB be brought to the County and City Commissions. This report focuses on the progress by the PSCB since their first meeting in June; the PSCB has subsequently met three times.

Memorandum of Agreement:

In order to formalize the creation of the PSCB and move forward with the consolidation of dispatch systems, it has been recommended that the County and City Boards and the Sheriff enter into a Memorandum of Agreement. County, City, and Sheriff's administrative and legal staff drafted a Memorandum of Agreement and which was unanimously approved by the PSCB during the August 25, 2006 meeting.

The PSCB recommended that the Memorandum of Agreement be brought before the County and City Boards as well as the Sheriff in order to execute the agreement of consolidating dispatch centers and formalize the Public Safety Communication Board.

Developing an Implementation Plan:

During the first meeting of the PSCB, it was determined that in order to develop a consolidation plan for joint dispatch a consultant would need to be hired. The PSCB agreed that several issues relating to integration of various technology and other factors were too intricate for the PSCB to handle alone. Therefore, the PSCB has taken the necessary step to hire a third party consultant.

County, City, and Sheriff administrative staff worked together to draft a Request for Proposals (RFP) which addressed five scopes of work outlined by the PSCB during the June 8, 2006 meeting. These scopes of work include the following: developing an implementation plan that may include: personnel integration, technology integration, creation of a time line for integration, and the determination of financial needs. The RFP was issued in July under the City purchasing guidelines.

On August 25, 2006, the PSCB received the responses to the request for proposals. The Board is currently in the process of reviewing and evaluating each one of these proposals. It is anticipated that within the next 30 days, the PSCB will be issuing a recommendation to the County and City Commissions in order to hire the consultant who will assist the PSCB in developing an implementation plan for the public safety communication.

The Director of Public Safety Communications:

In addition to hiring a consultant, the PSCB has also begun to move forward with developing a job description for the Director of Public Safety Communications. On June 8, 2006, the PSCB requested the County, City, and Sheriff's Human Resources departments to create a job description for this position.

On June 27th the Human Resource departments of the County, City, and Sheriff presented the PSCB with a job description for the Director of Public Safety Communications. 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. However, the PSCB agreed to wait until after a consultant has been selected and working with the PSCB before discussing the selection process for hiring a Director of Public Safety Communications.

Location of the Public Safety Communications Center

At the August 25th meeting, the PSCB recommended that County and City staff begin the process of compiling potential sites for a joint communication center in the event that the consultant's recommended actions indicated that so doing is the most effective way to operate in the future, and that the appropriate officials of the County, City and Sheriff's office agree with that approach.

It is anticipated that preliminary findings will be brought back to the PSCB during their next regularly scheduled meeting

800 Mhz

On June 8, 2006 it was agreed upon by the PSCB that it would assume the responsibilities of the Management Oversight Committee for the 800 Mhz system. The Board was subsequently updated on the current condition of the 800 Mhz system, (the radio communication system for the County, City, and Sheriff). On June 27, 2006 the Board appointed a Technical Subcommittee to advise the Board on the technical aspects of public safety communications. The subcommittee includes representatives from the County, City, Sheriff, and Police Departments. At the July 18, 2006, the PSCB received a presentation from Tusa Consulting regarding the current system and possible alternative solutions.

At the August 25, 2006 meeting, the PSCB had considerable discussion regarding the future of the communications system. To allow all options to be considered for the replacement or upgrade to the existing system, the PSCB has directed the Technical Sub-Committee to finalize a Request for Proposal (RFP). The PSCB will consider the issuance of the proposal at their next regularly meeting. Due to the specific technical requirements of this RFP, a consultant may be utilized to assist in the drafting of the document.

Mutual Aid

At the June 8, 2006 meeting, the Sheriff and Police Chief discussed issues regarding the existing mutual aid agreement regarding law enforcement. Several pertinent points were made and modifications were presented to the PSCB for review. Due to the fact that the agreements are documents executed between the Sheriff and the City (TPD) a formal vote of approval was not necessary, however the Sheriff and Police Chief concurred on the proposed changes.