

**9-1-1 CALL-TAKING/DISPATCH  
SERVICES WORKING GROUP  
General Meeting #3**

FINAL <i>approved as amended</i> Approval Date: 9/27/16
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**4 August 2016  
Cap. Plaza Hotel, 100 State St., Montpelier, VT – Room #338**

**10:03 AM – Call to Order**

Chair Gary Taylor brought the meeting to order. The following were in attendance:

**Working Group Members Present**

VT Enhanced 9-1-1 Board Representative: Chief Gary Taylor, Working Group Chair  
VT State Employees Assoc. (VSEA) Representative: Sarah Copen (via conference bridge)  
VT Ambulance Assoc. Representative: Jim Finger, President  
VT League of Cities & Towns (VLCT) Representative: Gwynn Zakov  
VT Assoc. of Chiefs of Police Representative: Chief Leonard Stell  
Dept. of Public Safety Representative: Captain Tom Hango (via conference bridge)

**Enhanced 9-1-1 Staff Members Present**

Barbara Neal, Executive Director  
Soni Johnson, E9-1-1 Board Clerk

**Others Present**

Major William Sheets, VT State Police  
Paco Aumand, Executive Director, Central VT Public Safety Authority  
Chief Seth DiSanto, Newport Police Department  
Lee Krohn, Chittenden County Regional Planning  
Chief Steve Locke, Burlington FD  
Stephen Whitaker, Member of the Public

**Approval of Minutes**

*7/12/16 - Motion: Chief Stell made a motion to accept the minutes as written; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Jim Finger. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously by voice vote.*

**Business**

- Paco Aumand, CVPSA
  - Exec. Director Aumand provided an overview of the Central VT Public Safety Authority.
    - It is focused on dispatching, not 9-1-1 call-taking.
    - Working towards regional dispatch consolidation; it can be more efficient, reduce overtime & staffing redundancies, create redundancies in operations, and help contain the costs of public safety services long-term.
    - Working to develop full dispatching services, not just taking the call and handing it off to appropriate agency, but full involvement from beginning to end of the emergency.
  - He also spoke of a dispatch funding study conducted in 2003 (when he was affiliated with the Dept. of Public Safety). A copy of that report was previously provided to the working group and is available from the E9-1-1 Board office upon request.
  - Paco provided the group with the history of how dispatching through DPS came to be free.
    - DPS received a federal grant back in the 70's to build the statewide microwave network. Part of the grant requirements was that DPS provide dispatching service to all law enforcement in Vermont.
- Mike Smith was invited to this meeting but was unable to attend. However, he was able to speak to Executive Director Barbara Neal, prior to this meeting, to discuss the working group's mandate. Mike Smith previously produced a report for the Enhanced 9-1-1 Board in which he made several recommendations concerning 9-1-1

PSAP & dispatch funding. He stands behind the recommendations in his report. A copy of that report was previously provided to the working group and is available from the E9-1-1 Board office upon request.

- Major Sheets provided an overview of the Dept. of Public Safety's current position:
  - The department is currently working on cost figures for dispatching services.
    - Those figures will be able to be used to formulate a fee structure
  - The department still favors a move to regional dispatch.
- Lee Krohn (from Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission) spoke to the group about the Commission's ongoing regional dispatch implementation study for a number of municipalities in Chittenden County.
- Chair Taylor asked working group members if they had enough info to be able to work on recommendations or if more input was needed. Members agreed that no further input needed.

#### Discussion/Comments:

- There have been multiple attempts over the years to formulate and implement a cost model/fee structure for Department of Public Safety dispatching services. It has never been completed.
- There is a need to educate legislators, municipal officials, and the general public on the differences between 9-1-1 call-taking & dispatch services, how both services work, the costs associated with each, and how current funding is determined for both.
- Why would towns/service providers move away from Public Safety dispatching services? (you can't compete with free)
- There is a need to develop a fair/equitable fee structure. Can it be done in a way that works for both the State & for the free market?
- Towns will need time to plan for having to pay for dispatch services.
- Can the Universal Service Fund charge be increased? If the fee is increased can the extra funds be used for dispatch services funding?
- What savings, if any, will the State see if Public Safety dispatching services are reduced?
- The argument has been made that taxpayer dollars used for the Public Safety budget could be considered payment for dispatch services and requiring towns/agencies to pay for those services is double taxation.
- What are the true costs of dispatching? (staffing, bricks & mortar, equipment, different types of emergency calls require different levels of service, etc.)
- How to figure what to charge for dispatch (by population, by number of calls, combination of both)?
- How many dispatch centers/positions would be needed statewide to handle all dispatch calls?
- Possibility of creating dispatch districts
- Would consolidation of 9-1-1 PSAPs save money?
- Group should research fees/costs for current local and regional dispatch centers.

#### **Public Comments/Questions**

Stephen Whitaker spoke about 9-1-1 funding & budget issues, and current/future 9-1-1 system configuration. He suggested that the working group ask for more input from other services/agencies. He also suggested that the working group track current services/needs geographically to help with the possible creation of dispatch districts.

#### **Next Meeting Date & Adjournment**

It was determined that the next Working Group meeting would be held on Tuesday, 27 September 2016. The meeting will take place in Montpelier (location tbd).

*Motion: There being no further business, Chair Taylor entertained a motion to adjourn; move by Jim Finger, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Chief Stell. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously by voice vote. The meeting adjourned at 11:50 AM.*

Respectfully submitted:

Soni Johnson  
Soni Johnson, Clerk

8/10/16  
Date

Minutes Amended: 9/27/16 Section Amended: Next Meeting Date & Adjournment Change: Jim Finger listed in motion to adjourn.
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