



TOWN COUNCIL BUDGET WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES JANUARY 31, 2017

Christopher Brunelle, At Large 2016
Eric Metivier, District 1 2016
Roger Bickford, District 2, 2016
Dale Crafts, At Large 2017
Normand Albert, At Large 2018
Kasie Kolbe, District 1 2018
Allen Ward, District 2 2018

CALL TO ORDER. The Chairman, Allen Ward, called the meeting to order and waived the pledge of allegiance to the flag at 6:00 PM.

ROLL CALL. Members present were Councilors Brunelle, Crafts, Albert (arriving at 6:22 p.m.), Kolbe, Ward, Lunt (arriving at 6:15 p.m.), and Crawford. Also present were Diane Barnes, Town Manager; Sean Galipeau, Fire Chief, Mark Hagan, Police Chief; Ryan Leighton, Public Works Director; Shelly Reynolds, Water Department; Traci Austin, School Committee Chairman; Allen Ouellette, Transportation Director; Donald Fellows, Planning Board Chairman; Miriam Morgan-Alexander, Assessment Review/Appeals Board Member; Eric Samson, Androscoggin County Sheriff; Martin Fournier, Androscoggin County Communications Manager; Larry Post, Androscoggin County Administrator; and approximately twenty citizens in the audience.

DISPATCH CONSOLIDATION DISCUSSION

Sheriff Samson explained what happens when they receive a 911 call. Depending upon the action required after they gather information they could transfer the call to our dispatcher in Lisbon, exchange information, and leave it in Lisbon's hands to dispatch services. Chief Hagan said then our officers are dispatched along with whatever services are required, which is what happens when someone calls the 353-2500 number.

Martin Fournier explained that when a 911 emergency call comes through their PSAP for medical help they hold onto the call, conference it, start appropriate mutual aid, and start appropriate Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD) procedures, which are standard protocols scripted for immediate medical intervention. County Dispatchers are EMD certified and can intervene prior to first responders getting to the scene. If they stay on script there is a better chance of survival in certain situations. He explained that their quality assurance program monitors calls to ensure they are doing the correct thing. EMD certified dispatcher's assign codes for emergency medical technicians (EMT) to use so upon arrival EMT's are ready to respond. EMT's convey these codes to the emergency room at the hospital so their staff is prepared to respond immediately.

Chief Hagan pointed out that this consolidation involves more than just who answers the phone. There are four full-time communication officers and five reserve communication officers working at the Lisbon Comm Center. This affects these individual's lives and their stress levels. He said there were good and bad aspects to the consolidation.

The pros are that:

- Officers in the field have greater access to a bigger database that holds a wealth of information. For instance, that database would pull up all the related information on a single individual for each encounter they may have had with an officer anywhere in the state using this combined IMC application.
- It would take over our IT freeing up that officer for more law enforcement work.
- It would reduce the time it takes to process prisoners because our local application doesn't talk to their county application.
- It would allow Lisbon access to extra staff on duty during the busier times, like Fridays and weekends.

The Cons are that:

- Lisbon would lose local control. If Lisbon wanted to track a certain activity in our application, today we just add a field and track it, but that process would take longer to accomplish if we were not in control of

the application and would be subject to their approval, although it would probably receive approval the process of changing it would take much longer before it happens.

- It would require a potential administrative change. Residents rave about the county's administration. There is nothing negative to say today; however as elected Sheriffs change potentially service could be effected.
- Then there is the loss of face-to-face contact. Today we have a live person to greet you 24/7. There would be a phone in our lobby with a direct line and camera linked to the person in Auburn. You could see and talk to a dispatcher who would dispatch an officer to Lisbon's Comm Center if needed.
- Lisbon monitors cameras for buildings, the booking area, fire, school, and so on, but the county would not monitor these.
- Lisbon monitors radios and dispatches for the School and Public Works; however the county would not dispatch. The county dispatchers would respond by making the appropriate calls for services but they would not be dispatched; meaning same thing accomplished but done differently.
- Today, Lisbon notarizes documents 24/7, but with consolidation this would not be available.

Chief Hagan said all of this comes down to the level of service you and the community expect and want from your local Police Department.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Fern Larochelle pointed out that when an arrest is made and transported to the county it leaves Lisbon without an officer. Councilor Crawford pointed out that the potential savings from consolidation would be enough to hire an extra person so Lisbon could have two officers on duty. Councilor Albert mentioned Police departments are having trouble filling spots with personnel. Councilor Ward explained that the loss of services for the costs savings with the change from dispatchers to an administrative person during the day plus extra staff overnight would produce no real savings in the end.

Martin Campbell said he runs a wrecker service. He said Lisbon has talked about consolidation four times already and each time the results are the same, we like it the way it is. We know 353-2500 is not broke. He said the big picture tells us that there really isn't any savings. He said we are all set with what we have.

Miriam Morgan-Alexander indicated she has been a recipient of these services on at least three occasions. She said once she had been burgled. Lisbon's officers showed up within 15 minutes, found the perpetrator, and off to jail he went for five years for stealing firearms. On another occasion, she needed a very quick ride to the hospital which ended very well. She said Lisbon is a community of over 9,000 people and the system we have works so like Mr. Campbell said, don't mess with it.

Larry Fillmore mentioned that technology has changed so much. Now we can save people's lives when we call 911 and it's received by an EMD at a qualified PSAP unit. He said these operators are qualified to gather medical information that saves lives and they should be able to dispatch Lisbon's first responders. He indicated saving lives matters and time is critical. Medical information is critical and getting this information to EMT's should be our main concern here. Councilor Albert requested information and numbers for response times.

Harry Moore, Lisbon Police Sergeant, said when it was thought the county would not be continuing with their services Lisbon became a qualified PSAP unit with EMD certified dispatchers; however, the state closed several PSAPs and Lisbon was one of those. Chief Hagan pointed out there is a cost to training our dispatchers to be EMD certified again and that's around \$40,000 to \$50,000 and perhaps more. He explained when an EMD dispatcher is on a call another dispatcher would need to be available to handle the rest of the calls coming in.

Traci Austin reported Lisbon's school system monitors radios on busses and in buildings. If switched they would continue to monitor them on their own, but right now they are also being monitored by Lisbon's Comm Center. They communicate with Lisbon's Comm Center about road conditions and so on. If changed, they would develop new protocols with the safety committee and decide how to handle out of town bus trips after business hours.

Chief Galipeau said dispatchers are the lifeline to getting resources to a scene. He said county dispatchers would have their emergency numbers when needed to handle the mutual aid aspect. He pointed out mutual aid is dispatched directly from Lisbon right now, but a change would require the county to call Sagadahoc first and then Sagadahoc would do the dispatching.

Jim MacDonnell of Lisbon Emergency pointed out that they would be responding either way. He said they could get reports anytime instead of waiting though. He said in medical emergencies the codes would tell them what's needed up front when dispatched, which would improve services, plus tell them if they needed lights and sirens. Councilor Ward requested the stats for the percentage of 911 calls not being forwarded for the last year.

Mr. Leighton indicated the Comm Center calls Public Works in when the road conditions warrant it. When officers see a pump station light on they notify dispatch to contact Public Works. Neighbors call the Comm Center when they see a pump station light on as well.

Shelly Reynolds from the Water Department indicated their concerns have been addressed. She said they do want log sheets and to know how long it takes them to respond to calls.

Councilor Kolbe pointed out that no one should be advocating residents call 353-2500 first in an emergency. Residents should always call 911.

Roger Cote said since both departments were professional. He supported going with the county if the cost savings would add two new officers in Lisbon.

Sergeant Moore pointed out that once Lisbon loses control, it can't go back. He said it's not worth it to him. He suggested voters make this decision, not the Council. Mr. Larochelle suggested getting other quotes for dispatch services.

COUNCILOR COMMENTS: Councilor Ward explained this was only a discussion to see what's best for Lisbon. Councilor Albert thanked everyone for attending. He said this was a good start. Councilor Crawford asked those in attendance to keep this factual when informing their neighbors about this meeting. Councilor Lunt suggested a tour of the county and local communications center. Councilor Crafts said this was all good stuff. He said he liked the security of keeping it local and indicated this decision should be up to the Council to decide. Councilor Brunelle said he would like this to stay local. He pointed out that there is more than one service out there, but we keep hearing from the same person every time. Councilor Ward mentioned he could not see any savings because he would like to put it back into the service to hire additional employees.

ADJOURNMENT

Seeing no further business to come before the Council, the Chairman adjourned the meeting at 9:19 p.m. Order passed - Vote 7-0.

Twila D. Lycette, Council Secretary
Town Clerk, Lifetime CCM/MMC
Date Approved May 17, 2016