

## **City of Minneapolis Ways and Means Budget Committee**

July 27, 2009

Update on 911/311 Department Shared Services discussions

### **Hennepin County EMS Co-Location:**

911 concluded discussions with Hennepin County Emergency Medical Services on possible co-location of dispatching services. The available space in 911 is not sufficient to accommodate the County: even with extensive and expensive remodeling, we could not meet future expansion needs. Radio expansion costs are also prohibitive to this effort. We continue to enjoy CAD partnership and operational efficiencies in our joint business processes and sharing of best practices between our two centers.

### **Virtual Data Fusion:**

This project aims to provide a data sharing network between incompatible CAD systems. A proof-of-concept trial is scheduled for September. A request has been made for grant funding for this project.

### **911 Consolidation with Hennepin County:**

Staff attended two meetings in July related to the 911 shared services discussion.

Hennepin County held a meeting for suburban cities that are operating independent 911 centers. City staff sat in on this meeting, and learned that several cities had approached the Sheriff about joining the dispatch center. The County wants to know if other suburbs may be interested. Key points from the meeting are:

- The Sheriff is planning to build a new dispatch facility in Plymouth and needs to know if other cities will be joining in order to properly size the facility.
- The County Administration indicated there would be a fee for new joiners, though no cost-sharing model was presented.
- The Sheriff's Department is opposed to charging fees for services; there is the issue of existing customers having historically received services at no cost.
- Several of the cities in attendance have invested heavily in their existing technology and facilities and are reluctant to abandon these investments.
- Some cities expressed concern over service levels provided by the County
- There has been no discussion at the County level of a joint powers or other shared governance model should additional cities join.

Staff met with Sheriff Stanek on July 22, 2009 to ask his thoughts and gain clarity on the direction that the Sheriff's Department may take regarding shared 911 services. Sheriff Stanek stated:

- The Sheriff's Department is not actively soliciting new partners
- The Sheriff is open to discussions with newcomers with formal local council action
- The Sheriff provides a venue for local participation and control
  - User's group
- The planned Plymouth facility is not sized to accommodate Minneapolis
  - If consolidation occurred, Minneapolis potentially could occupy existing space in City Hall under management of the Sheriff's Department.
- There is no uniform position between the Hennepin County Board and the Sheriff on charging fees for service.

**Recommendation:**

Given this information and what we know from previous studies, it seems that there is insufficient information to move forward with a city-county 911 consolidation effort at this time. The potential for meeting the criteria is slight, the county is not actively seeking new partners, and a cost savings is not readily apparent.

Staff recommends that we continue to monitor the developments at the state level, as well as movement locally by other independent dispatch centers, and report to the committee in January of 2010.

Heather M. Hunt, ENP  
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