

Service Committee Minutes

Honorable Council
City of Newark, Ohio
September 2, 2015

There was a meeting of the Service Committee in Council Chambers on Monday August 31, 2015 after the Ways & Means Committee with these members present:

Bill Cost Jr.
Jeff Rath
Jeremy Blake

Ryan Bubb
Alex Rolletta

We wish to Report:

1. **Resolution No. 15-81** authorizing the Director of Public Service to prepare and submit applications to participate in the Ohio Public Works Commission State Capital Improvements Program and to execute contracts as required was considered.

Brian Morehead- this is an annual event the State has Ohio Public Works Commission State Capital Improvements Program, they have a grant loan application due every year about this time, and it is actually due October 2nd this year. This is a piece of legislation that goes along with the request. There are two projects under consideration right now, road and intersection improvements at Sharon Valley Rd and Evans Blvd is our top choice. We are evaluating costs for that to make sure the costs would be eligible for this program. If for some reason that project is not eligible then we will move forward with the project to do additional resurfacing throughout the city.

Motion by Mr. Bubb to send to full Council, second by Mr. Rath

Motion passed by a 5-0 vote.

2. **Resolution No. 15-82** Multi-use trail along the South Fork Licking River that will run between the Ohio Street Bridge over the North Fork Licking River and South Second Street. In addition, there will be an on-street bike route on South Second Street between Ohio Street and Walnut Street, within the City of Newark was considered.

Brian Morehead- earlier in the year we applied to ODOT for consideration in the transportation alternative program. Over the course of the last couple of weeks we received the good news from them that we would be eligible to participate in their program and that they would provide funding for the project I just described. This is

preliminary legislation to cooperate with ODOT on this project. The good news is the alternative transportation program usually has an 80/20 funding split but in this case they are willing to assume up to 95% of the costs for this project.

Motion to send this to full Council by Mr. Bubb, second by Mr. Blake

Mr. Blake- I want to thank Brian for his work on this and to quote a popular T.V. slogan “this is awesome sauce”

Motion passed by a vote of 5-0.

3. **Resolution No. 15-76** authorizing and directing the Director of Public Service and the Director of Public Safety enter into contract with the Licking County Board of Commissioners and Licking County Emergency Management Agency for the provision of emergency 9-1-1 communications services on behalf of the City of Newark, Division of Police was considered.

Director Spurgeon- as you know in June the administration came before this committee and we had a robust discussion on the benefits and lack thereof, of the current dispatching model. It was the will of the committee that we go negotiate with the folks at the County and bring back a contract that you could look at. We are here before you with all the folks involved if you should have questions. I think it would be a good use of the committee’s time to hear from Chief Connell. I can kind of tell you from my perspective but I think he tells it very well on the needs of his division.

Chief Connell- I was given this position in March and within one week this subject came up. I along with the Command Staff, the three Captains in the Division were initially very opposed to this as police officers and administrative police officers in a chaotic career we don’t like to give up control of anything that we can have control of. This subject has been considered heavily and it comes down to economics. We can’t afford the model that we are currently in. Our options are to do nothing, continue doing things the way they have been done since 1990 and the second option is to come up with the money to outfit our department technologically so we can continue to do it in a safe manner. We know that seven officers have been murdered in the United States in the last nine days. I am not comfortable doing nothing. The third option is to go with the County with the proposal.

Mr. Rath- given the three options which one would you choose?

Chief Connell- I will give you an analogy on that. If I ask my wife to buy a new vehicle and all I could afford was a Chevy Malibu and she says to me is that the best possible deal? No a Corvette is but I can’t afford the Corvette. I would love to set back the hands of time when we had money in this Division and buy the equipment then in a proactive

manner so we are not having this discussion today. Quite frankly the City of Newark and the Police Division did not do that so we are where we are.

Mr. Blake- I understand the economic situation that the city is in but my concern and a lot of people's concern throughout our community is the quality of service. I would like to hear your comments on when this contract goes through and we are now with the County which means Sherriff employees there is something that happens do you feel comfortable being able to address the quality of service that would be given through that dispatching model?

Chief Connell- yes and again initially I and the Captains were not good with that because we didn't know what our oversight capabilities would be. If we have a problem in the middle of the night with things not being done correctly how do we correct that so we can protect our citizens and our employees? Through the discussion I have been involved with recently with the County I took 29 concerns that we came up with. All of those have been addressed verbally with me and I do feel comfortable at this point that we do have a mechanism to take care of those issues.

Mr. Blake- this is initially a two year contract and then after the two years it is up for automatic renewal how will you evaluate the quality of service after that time period?

Chief Connell- the contract is with the Service Director to negotiate the terms of that contract.

Mr. Blake- you will provide input obviously

Chief Connell- I would hope that I am given deep input into that. We would have to evaluate. We have not done this, other agencies have done it and loved it and other agencies have done it and hated it. After the two years we are going to have to make a firm decision on where we go in the future. From my gut the Sherriff's Department operates efficiently and the 911 Center operates efficiently, there are human errors involved in everything even in our own house I, we make human errors.

Mr. Rath- under termination of agreement it appears to say you can terminate this agreement given a 180 day notice.

Law Director- a 180 day notice prior to the expiration of the current term. First term is two years automatically renews for annual terms so if any party wanted to terminate that they don't have to have a good reason they can terminate it just because but you have to give notice within 180 days. It goes on to compel both parties to engage in good faith negotiations with the goal towards continuing the relationship if at all possible.

Mr. Rath- if we make this move obviously we are not going to spend a ton of money on equipment, we don't have that so it seems our only two options are to stay where we are or make this move. If we make this move do you think we will improve the safety of our citizens and our officers or will it stay the same or will it be detrimental?

Chief Connell- given the two options we have facing us the third one being to buy equipment that I don't know we can afford; of course safety of our officers would be better because we are going to a CAD system. If we stay with what we have now we won't have that. It comes down to officer's safety and the CAD system is what the entire nation is going to and we are not there, we are way behind the curve. I have heard that safety will be less that it will be better; it is speculative on all parts. I don't think that we have any evidence in any degree that it will be less safe. I see no loss of safety for our citizens I see it as potentially being better. CAD provides an entirely different level of officer knowledge. When I began this talk with you guys I talked about officers wanting to control every possible aspect that they can control in a chaotic environment and this is one more layer of being able to control that. CAD is something we should have done years ago. We hired an officer from Pickerington that came to us close to 10 years ago and he had CAD in his department. He couldn't fathom that we didn't have it.

Mrs. Floyd- I know my question should probably be directed to Mr. Rhodes but I know something that has been asked several times is if we agree to this and we are paying for this system what is going to be done about the other communities that get this 911 system without paying?

Director Rhodes- that is the reason for the two year agreement. That will give our friends at the County two years to engage the other members of the County so they can begin to pay into the system also. Our hope is that more will pay into the system and there is more money into the system thus lowering the cost to everybody involved.

Chief Connor- I think I might have something to say here, the Fire EMS Division has been using the County for our dispatch for a number of years. The technology in the current regional communication system is state of the art. We have moved forward in leaps and bounds in our ability to dispatch calls, receive that information and it is transferred into the patient care and the fire service provided here in the city. It is very efficient. Our management system works flawlessly with the current alarm. I have had a great relationship with the leaders and have had minimal problems with the County with the dispatching. Their management has been extremely responsive to our needs at the Fire Department. Mutual aid response in my world is imperative. We have to dispatchers sitting in the same room receiving the call, not transferring that call and handling those emergencies. The Fire world and Police world are different. We use mutual aid; we communicate and respond with other departments around us every day so I have to have the ability for dispatchers in the same room to communicate information very quickly without having to transfer a call to another entity to try to get responding units to communicate with each other. I think consolidation of the dispatching services and keep all of that in the same room for the Fire Department has been wonderful. I have been very impressed with the current leadership under EMA Director Shawn Grady and

his staff. It is an everyday conversation I may have with one of them and their Supervisors in relation to any speed bumps we may have along the way, they are all minor and they address them very quickly. I am happy with that response. If you haven't had a chance to go over and look at the Regional Communication Center here in Newark, knock on the door and get a tour, I think you would be very impressed. The technology is not yesterday's technology it is the future. Grant dollars have gone into the CAD we currently use and just as mentioned before we use the computer systems in our vehicles as well. Information is transferred conveniently. Mapping systems are there immediately. There is information that can be transferred by typing in a message, calling you on the radio, doing all types of things are immediate, there is no delay. I think the County has taken some strides through grant money, through local funds to put us in the situation we are. Obviously at the Fire Department we have had many conversations about reduced staffing. We can try to pick up the slack in other areas and communications is one of them. Obviously standing here with 10,000 plus runs a year at the Fire Department alone we use it every day, forty, fifty times a day sometimes. I think it is very important for you to hear from me that I am very happy with what the County does as far as the fire and EMS dispatching goes and that is under the same management.

Mr. Cost- when you have had bumps in the road or you had concerns, you were able to address them and work with them to solve those kinds of problems? After listening to the Police I am thinking about trying to maintain control of your own people, I can see the importance of that. I am hoping that would be the same on the Police side when you have a concern or you have something that you think needs addressed that they would be open to that type of conversation.

Chief Connor- they are and we have had those specific conversations. Chief Connell was very specific he brought a lot of issues to the meetings that he may have, I think he thought of everything he could possibly think of with his staff. The difficult questions that he asked in the meetings they answered them appropriately. I feel very comfortable with what I go through every day. If I have an issue I can call there and they immediately address it. Even our supervisors have the authority to call over there and make a change and talk to the people over there to get things fixed. Chief Connell has not been here but I have for a number of years to work with the Communications Center. I am very happy with their ability to respond. I have developed relationships with all of their people, their supervisors even down to their dispatchers. We know each other's voices on the radio. That has been brought up in the past. There are relationships that are formed there very quickly because Newark Police and Newark Fire are very busy entities so we will develop those relationships if you don't have them. I am impressed with the way they deal with us. We all have the same goals in mind to do

the best we can for the community at the end of the day. Chief Connell and I struggle with the budget. We are trying to find ways to be more efficient and get the same kind of work done. This is one case where I don't think we have an option.

Mr. Cost- Chief Connell there are calls that come into the Police Station that are considered non-emergency, in reading the contract I want to say the magic number is like 40,000 or 42,000 calls can I safely assume a non-emergency call to the Police Station is going to go to the 911 Center also but not count.

Chief Connell- no it would count. I think part of the misnomer that we have in reading this is that it refers to the 911 Center, that is who is going to be taking the calls. Some will be 911 calls and some will still be regular calls for service. What we are comfortable with on the number of calls per year, the negotiated number is a lot of the things we do now. The numbers that we have now are multiple cards, the system that we've used since 1990, it is a stamp card, and we have multiple cards for so events. Some of those will go down because it is charged per dispatch able event. That is a big difference for us in how we have done business. Those numbers wouldn't be reflected. If we had an officer follow up on a call the next day and they stamp the card because we have to document what they were doing that next day, showing where they were at and why they were things of that nature now that would be all rolled back into that first call, dispatch able events. It is the ones that go with that dispatch able event. Calling the Police Department to find out how much your impound is during the work day would still be handled by us. Dispatch able events would go to the 911 Center.

Mr. Rath- one of the concerns that were brought up the last time we talked about this was you have a detention room where you can put a prisoner while an officer can do paperwork or whatever for a short period of time, there was an issue brought up that they were concerned about supervision during off hours, late hours how was that addressed?

Chief Connell- we have a proposal that we are working on to close the facility down, we use it very rarely. The number of times we have used it in the last year has been 3-4 people in there. We do use it when we bring somebody in to breath test them for a DUI which could be relocated. We are looking at alternate uses of that space but I think we are going to be out of the THF business. We have a good relationship with the County. When we built the building we had trouble housing suspects, we don't have that trouble anymore. Just like some things with the State on drug testing. We have a good relationship and we get something done for free now. You don't need to stay in that business.

Mr. Rath- what are we not asking that we should be? This is your job not ours you're the professional.

Chief Connell- I have to look at this. Within one week of taking over as Interim Chief of

Police I sat down with all of my dispatch personnel and told them that this was on the table. I believe in being honest with them I have tried not to lie to any of them about anything. If they ask me a question I try to be honest with them. This is a huge cost for me personally. These are people that I have worked with up to 24 years of my 25 years with this department. This doesn't go unnoticed. There have been concerns that people will be out of jobs that people will have to move. As far as that goes it depends on the systems used with the Collective Bargaining Agreement with the Unions. Potentially nobody could be out of employment but I can't speak to that yet because that is a negotiated thing. The human cost, to know that there are people involved; I have said to them eye to eye in a closed room I want all of them to apply for that job because honestly it makes us better if my people go to the County if we do this. They are the most qualified. I don't know what the procedure will be but that is my opinion.

Mr. Rath- how has personnel costs been affected since this issue has been raised? Has there been an increase in overtime?

Chief Connell- we can't sustain the model we are on. The path and the trajectory we are on for costs we can't sustain this. We are looking at from my Division alone from the 27th pay and the pay raises we are looking at a \$241,000.00 deficit. I have had trouble making ends meet this year. I am projected to be out of overtime for uniformed officers by the end of September. I am at \$45,000.00 this year covering dispatch overtime.

Mr. Rath- at \$45,000.00 are you close to the end?

Chief Connell- we are close we will run out before the end of the year. We have had 1477 hours of Communication Operators being off and we have covered with 1422 hours of overtime. It is nearly one for one.

Ms. Hall- I have a question about the CAD system. Is that something that is an overall CAD system for the Officers as well as new equipment for the station itself? In another words if there is an overall cost can we do this slowly? Can we work our way into updating and staying the way we are?

Chief Connell- probably no because the only thing that we have that would potentially work in that system are the laptops in the cars. We have computers on station that remain to be seen if they would need to be upgraded. All of the reports that we have gotten from the beginning of this until now have included workstations in the actual building for dispatchers to use. Obviously that is a major cost, they are rather pricey. To give you a cost of what it would be, the last quote that I have, I actually received an email from New World today that said they have an updated quote for me but they weren't willing to discuss it with me over the phone so I don't know what that is yet. In April we got a rough estimate of between \$300,000.00 and \$500,000.00. I honestly can't afford that payment. Barbara Gilkes could tell you that we have looked for grants but we can't find any that will cover us. Again it's not my ideal option but it's what I have.

Mr. Blake- I have a question for Director Grad if he wouldn't mind coming up. We just heard the Chief talk about how he has worked with his dispatchers for 24 years. Can you speak for the record here about the opportunity that would be available to the dispatchers at your facility?

Director Grady- at this point in time after the conversation I had today with the Coronel they will be looking for 8 people if this deal goes forward. They will take from whoever applies for those positions but they would prefer people with experience. That was the words right out of the Coronel's mouth. I would think the people with dispatch experience and experience with the City of Newark would have a preference. It would make sense but that is how they want to proceed with it.

Mr. Cost- I want to go back to the question that I asked earlier. Do you feel as if the relationship to be able to work with both of the Chiefs is that a huge priority to you to make sure that they are able to address you with problems, concerns and ideas?

Director Grady- sure. When Chief Connell brought his concerns to the table I think we made it clear at that point that we are very concerned and wanted to address each and every one of those concerns. The only way that this works and works to both parties satisfaction is if we have great relationships at the beginning level. So at the first inkling they have an issue they bring it to us so we can address it. That is the way we try to operate with every jurisdiction.

Mr. Rolletta- how many political subdivisions have contract for fire and EMS with the County?

Director Grady- one, one currently that dates back to sometime in the 90's

Mr. Rolletta- so those services are provided without a charge correct?

Director Grady- yes

Mr. Rolletta- it seems that the City of Newark has been the only one charged for over a decade now and I was just kind of blown away by that and I was wondering if shouldn't the County lower the price down to 115,000.00 regardless of this deal? Would that be something.....

Director Grady- we have a contract in place and at this point in time we are looking at as people affectionately referred to it as "the paper call" going with that model. The time frame for that model is to be determined. We are looking at 2016-2017 but we are running out of time to get it for 2016 because of budgets that everybody is going through. I have been here a year now and I was shocked when I saw that and I think Director Spurgeon reached out to me my first week here to bring this up as to how do we address this issue going forward. This whole negotiation, this whole process of looking at this option has been our way at trying to address this issue. Ultimately from the 911 Centers point of view as far both Law Enforcement and Fire we would love to have every jurisdiction in the County coming out of that center. It is an economy scale

that individual jurisdictions can't argue with. It is a cost savings measure that we can focus on keeping the equipment up to date. I could tell Chief Connor right now that we are implementing EFD for next year which is emergency fire dispatch. Since fire dispatching has been with the 911 Center for years that was the last of the three. There are three right now. The EMD which is emergency medical dispatch, EPD, emergency police dispatch and the third is EFD. We have committed to spending about \$70,000.00 next year to bring that in and not only train the dispatch under our side but also the Law Enforcement Dispatchers. Our overall goal here is to get both the Law Enforcement and Fire/EMS Dispatchers to operate the same. By doing it that way we are reducing the possibility of human error.

Mark Fraizer- after the two year contract is up is the cost renegotiated?

Director Grady- everything is renegotiated.

Mr. Guthrie- it seems to me that we are really doing quite a bit of speculating regarding what the future holds with this contract. Maybe the gentleman from the County can talk a little bit about what is actually transpiring with these political subdivisions out there who haven't been paying in the past because basically the only political subdivision that I am aware of that has a bump in revenue and that is the County because they get the lottery money. All the other political subdivisions that are using this service are in the same financial condition we are. I am going to be pretty amazed if they are going to say yes we are going to start paying for our runs even though we haven't in the past because you can't get blood out of a turnip. Many of them are in worse condition than we are. I am really interested in knowing what exactly is transpiring between the County and those political subdivisions. Are these political subdivisions seriously having conversations like in 2017 when everybody else is dying out on a vine here we are going to find money to do this? I would like to know where the money is going to come from for the rest of those political subdivisions. Along the lines of Mr. Rolletta's question it is mind boggling. It's almost like the City of Newark since the initial contract has been gouged and we have been carrying the other 24-26 other political subdivisions in this County for this service. Here we are in a very difficult financial situation ahead of us and we are just speculating and hoping that things are going to work out and that these other subdivisions are going to ante up and that the County is not going to come to the table in two years when we have no dispatch system and tell us they can't the other subdivisions and we can't incur the costs so we are going to have to raise you because the way I read the contract that can happen with a 120 day notice. A lot of speculation. I'm not going to be on Council but I hope Council isn't sitting here two years from now looking back at this and saying I'm not sure we made a smart move here.

Rhonda Loomis- the problem with the Health Department merger when we did that contract and I firmly believe that we paid too much for that as well and when Mr. Ebel

comes up here and you ask him how many of those citizens from 43055 are actually City of Newark he can't break that down. In this contract you have after so many calls it is going to start costing us \$12.00 a call and if they can't break down the 43055 what is actually City versus Township versus out Hanover way how will they do that for this and not end up charging us \$12.00 for what could be a Township call because according to the Health Department Commissioner he can't tell you out of 43055 what is actually City and what is Township and/or outlying areas that use 43055. My concern would be when we are charged \$12.00 a call I don't have any confidence in the overages that we may or may not see as a City.

Director Grady- the main difference between a Public Safety agency and the Licking County Department of Health is we do have a CAD system and that CAD system records all of those phone conversations and also classifies those conversations as to what that response is. I actually have sitting here my year to date figures. Currently for Newark Fire has had a total of 6,891 calls this year of which 6,011 calls were EMS, 880 calls were fire. We break that down by jurisdiction. To the previous gentleman's comment, the article in the Advocate a week ago Sunday was the first time we even brought out in the public the thought that we might be billing other jurisdictions. Come Tuesday morning we had a Fire Chief meeting and you could imagine what the topic of the day was of which I was getting beat to death over. There will be a lot of details to be worked out before that program becomes gospel and moves forward. The intent all along I was told this before I got here, even during my interview process the intent was never for the 911 Center to be completely subsidized by the General Fund. They wanted to offset those costs by eventually going to the paper call because that is the National model. Currently there was an article in the Dispatch a day or so ago about Upper Arlington which is considering moving into the Columbus Dispatch Center at \$20.00 a call. The market rate here in Ohio is right around \$22.00 based on what we have been able to find out. \$12.00 a call is extremely reasonable granted not to a jurisdiction that is cash dry and I understand that which is why we have to have these conversations with Fire Departments and local jurisdictions. One of my concerns during this whole process was that we need to bring this up sooner rather than later when we present it as a guess what is happening January 1. This should be done in negotiations with all of these jurisdictions. We absolutely understand that Newark has been paying for quite a few years but on the backside of that is that Newark also currently from January 1 to August 31st has almost 6900 calls. The next closest jurisdiction is 1600 calls so you are looking at 4 to 5 times the volume coming out of Newark Fire as opposed to any other Fire Department.

Mr. Cost – to go off of Mrs. Loomis's question, you are able to separate without any problem at all what is in the City of Newark?

Director Grady- tomorrow is the 1st and I will see a report generated by that CAD system as to what the full monthly numbers were for the month of August. We can program it to break down the numbers in different ways if we want like by Fire Departments say Heath, Granville or South West Licking which covers several jurisdictions.

Mr. Cost- then it will be the same for police?

Director Grady- yes we can do that

Mr. Guthrie- you referenced that it was never intended to be funded by the County General Fund and I understand that but isn't a portion of our phone bills in our City and every other political subdivision in this County going to 911 and is that considered General Fund dollars?

Director Grady- I think what you are referring to is the wireless fund which is for a lack of better terms a sir tax that is put on the cellphone cost. To this day I still can't tell you how that formula works out. We see wireless money coming down from the State each month and it can vary drastically from \$4,000.00 to as high as the mid 30's. We are mandated by State law to use that money to help offset and keep up these 911 Centers. There are annual maintenance fees associated with the EFD, EPD and EMD software. We are coming up on the two year mark of when we opened up this center. Typically about the three year mark we will have to start phasing out some of the equipment. Most of this equipment only lasts for three years. We are all familiar how Microsoft and software companies' work, every piece of software we have in there has a licensing fee attached. As part of this negotiation we are committed to spending \$40,000.00 of that fund to implement 4 call taker positions so we are going to change the model of how we operate because we realize bringing in Newark law enforcement drastically increases the number of calls coming into the center so we have to change how we process those calls. These things aren't cheap. We have to spend a ton of money just to maintain these systems outside of personnel costs and if we want to remain state of the art that is what we have to do. We aren't looking to at any point make this a revenue generating center. We are looking to offset the costs and that could be negotiated down the road.

Lew Shumaker- I would like to make a few comments regarding the proposal that is before you. In the financial section of it the County has been overcharging the City of Newark for Fire/EMS services for the last 15 years while the citizens have been paying for other jurisdictions to have these services. There are 26 Townships and other agencies including Heath, Granville and Pataskala yet only the City of Newark is charged. Clearly this wasn't fair by the County's own admission. The savings that is being shown on the document is only the decrease for the Fire/EMS dispatching service that the County agreed to because it shouldn't have been charged in the first place. If AFSCME had not brought this to your attention in our proposal back in April it would have been

status quo, we would have been still paying three hundred and some thousand dollars. A decrease of \$320,000.00 to \$115,000.00 is roughly a 64% decrease. If you multiply that by the 2.6 million dollars that the City of Newark has already paid to the County from 2006 to 2013 in a seven year span that is an overpayment to the County of 1.66 million dollars. Just think what the City could have done with that money. Mr. Marmie is always harping paving, we could have paved roads, we could have paved alleys, bought salt and we could have retained employees that we had to let go. Since January 2013 the County has received 1.395 million dollars in 911 wireless revenue and that is what Councilman Guthrie was speaking of. It is wireless only I am not sure about landlines. The Ohio Bureau of Taxation is supposed to be getting with us on that and also what Newark's share of that would be. We are beating a horse to bring back those 911 Fire services back here. Our employees are willing to do it. We have a 10 million dollar facility that is 9 years old that was built with this very thing in mind that the taxpayers are still going to pay for that is going to sit empty. In our opinion the City shouldn't negotiate to send the Police dispatching to the County they should be collaborating with AFSCME to bring those 911 call takers back to our facility that was completed 9 years ago at the cost of 10 million dollars. We believe that we can do that. We think that we are entitled to part of that 911 wireless revenue that is coming in and possibly landline and we are waiting for that information. Everybody has a phone, you had to have looked at your bill and there is a 911 charge that is where this money is being generated from. Then to hit on technology, the City has already purchased the records management portion of the quote that came from New World which by the way was under \$300,000.00 not \$300,000-\$500,000.00. New World is very gracious and said they would allow the City if Newark to purchase this stuff over a four year plan. We have already bought part of it. The cost to get the CAD part of it is going to be considerable less than that 299,000.00. We need to invest in our City and quit turning things over to the County at the minute we can't afford something. There has to other ways. The Union has done their homework. We have looked at things, we have talked about 911 revenue. The City needs to bring this back. The City has also in the past couple of weeks taken steps to fill two vacant positions within the Police Department that you are not aware of; a Data Entry Clerk and a Public Safety Officer in anticipation of training and utilization of the new software. The Data Entry Clerk has been vacant for several years, I'm guessing 5 or 6 and the Public Safety Officers has been vacant for a year and a half. This is despite their claims that additional duties performed by the dispatchers will be absorbed by current Records personnel. If the County is going to handle the 911 and law enforcement calls we anticipate needing additional personnel to complete these tasks. People that are there are not going to be able to pick these up, they can't do what they have got to do now and I know that is a concern of everybody. As far as the safety goes

the City Dispatchers have a vast knowledge of the City as well as the residents that they serve. In addition to a combined 107 years of collective experience between those 8 employees, there are 7 now. A majority of the Dispatchers have degrees and other law enforcement credentials which allow them to handle some non-emergency calls directly. The City will lose this knowledge which jeopardizes the safety of the citizens and the Officers. I realize Councilman Cost that you asked about non-emergency calls that came in and I don't know if there has been any address as to how they are going to handle that specifically if a call comes in at night but they do receive calls on the non-emergency line that do need to be dispatched. In fact recently they had a stabbing that came in on a regular line and they also had an armed robbery. The Officers lose the security of someone working directly with them at each shift as these dispatchers are assigned to a specific team of Officers. There are numerous issues that have been documented by Newark PD and Heath PD showing critical errors that have been made by the 911 Center. Fire was gracious enough to give us some of the issues they have and I can distribute those to you if you would like a copy. We can also give you those logs available upon request of the numerous issues. So it is not the rosy picture that they are all painting, there are issues. I'm sad to say we have to talk about them but we do. This is a very complex issue but you received a very simple proposal. It leaves more questions than it answers and we ask that the City takes the necessary steps to research this idea thoroughly perhaps through the formation of an Exploratory Committee or that of a private entity so an educated decision can be made by all Council.

Anna Rehl, 1293 Granville Rd- this lady who just spoke didn't give her name but I assume she was with the Union. I am a resident and I was here tonight to hear about this proposal and I am going to have to support everything going to County and if this is a difficult decision for each and every one of you then maybe you should put it on the taxpayers, by putting it on the ballot this coming fall if you can because the way I look at it as a taxpayer I would prefer that it not stay in the City and the reason is because a lot of these negotiated contracts with the Unions has caused us a lot of taxpayer dollars. I have some real problems with some of the things that go on. I have voiced my opinion in the past but I believe if you get the City to come in and you get the residents you will hear that most of them will vote to save the money, keep the employees by going to the County and I ask you to really think about this decision.

Motion by Mr. Bubb to send to full Council, second by Mr. Rath

Mr. Rath- Chief Connor I have a question for you if you don't mind sir. Would you ever consider bringing dispatching from the County back into the City of Newark?

Chief Connor- no, I have too many obligations with mutual aid. The Fire service is a lot different than the law enforcement but I have to have those dispatchers receiving calls and I use other entities in and around the Newark area, a medic from Heath, an engine

from Granville. All around different political entities are coming into the City. It is more efficient to have a County Dispatcher sitting next to a City Dispatcher communicating making sure that we get the information that we need. In some cases they would have to transfer a call back here. Plus I am very comfortable with the current dispatchers that we have and coming back would mean a whole new training thing in my world to try to get that back. You don't want separate it think of consolidating your dispatching is the way to go, bringing it all into one unified command center basically. Your Dispatcher, your emergency services is the most efficient and consistent.

Roger Stollard, 2399 Horns Hill Rd- I might represent yesterday according to Fire Chief. I'm an old guy, retired, a lot of years of experience and it is my basic philosophy that you should never relinquish local control over critical service. It's just my opinion and this is a critical element and that is why everybody is so concerned and it is complicated. The Advocate made reference to all of the opposition to it is emotional. Well hell yes it is emotional, these people are passionate about what they do, of course they are going to be emotional. I think it is an Officer safety and also citizen safety issue having been there done that. I understand what I did was a long time ago. That is my basic philosophy and my belief. I know it is tough as a Director and a Chief, it's a tough job to try to balance a budget; you folks have a tough job trying to pick what is the best. What is so disappointing in all of this is to have a Police Chief have to pick the lesser of two or three evils here and that is pretty disturbing. It is a matter of safety for everyone concerned. There is some debate about what it actually is going to cost. Now when Chief Sarver was here there was a five year plan and a ten year plan and it went through two accreditation processes. I'm not sure that any of this was a focus of that and if it wasn't why wasn't it? I don't expect you folks to have an answer for that. When the citizens passed the latest safety levy it was right after 911 and during that campaign if you will promised people that there would be 24 hour people at the desk and most of that was before domestic violence victims fleeing from an offender, we had safe rooms built and I'm not sure any of that is going to be available anymore. There was a command center built and how is that going to affect how that command center operates? I'm not trying to put you on the spot.

Chief Connell- the emergency operating center we don't have any plans to change that at this point. As far as entrance to the lobby that stays the same. That was one of my 29 concerns.

Roger Stollard- from the last time that I was here and what I've read in the Advocate which is not a lot the inference that I got was the 911 Operator and one of the biggest criticism that I heard was that you get a 911 Dispatcher, you have an emergency and it is a law enforcement emergency and they have to transfer it to a Newark PD Dispatcher. Is that still not going to be the situation is it still not going to go to the law enforcement

dispatcher who has the LEADS access and the LEADS certification? How is that going to work? I might be rehashing something that you have already discussed, I don't know.

Director Grady- the way that the Sherriff's office wants to do this if we are going to go down this road is that there would be a dedicated dispatcher for Newark operations and the.....

Roger Stollard- so the call would be transferred?

Director Grady- yes it is all in the same building. If the call taker takes the call then send it over to dispatch. It is internal to the building it's not being sent back to an external building.

Roger Stollard- but it is still being sent over to another dispatcher?

Director Grady- right the call takers do not dispatch.

Roger Stollard- I wrote down a few things. I have a whole list of concerns but I am not going to go into this because I'm sure people want to go home tonight. What about referrals, calls for assistance, 2-11 referrals people call for that who is going to handle that? What about Officer initiated calls, traffic stops, check subjects, how is all of that going to be handled? I am assuming that you have already addressed all of those things with the law enforcement dispatcher in the City building?

Mr. Rath- for those of us without the experience and the knowledge of the field, I don't know what a 2-11 referral is.

Director Grady- 211 is Pathways it is an assistance line outside of 911.

Roger Stollard- he is referring to another local agency for non-law enforcement concerns.

Director Grady- I'm really not going to answer the question because that is not my side of the house. It would be the Sherriff's office and they don't have a representative here.

Roger Stollard- these are my concerns: 211 referrals, court order verification, protection order verification, warrant verification, domestic violence stand- by, children's services assistance and alarm calls. These are all not 911 initiated, related. There are all kinds of Officer initiated activity that interacts with dispatchers. For instance if I am plain clothes guy and I am working an informant and I have a case that I am working on I have to do background checks and criminal history checks and all those kinds of things and you need police certification, you have to keep that confidential that is not something you share. So those are some of my concerns. There is a lot of interaction that these folks do with those dispatchers that aren't 911 specifically.

Mr. Marmie- did the Chief not state that those calls would be handled it's not just strictly the 911, the only type of calls that are really not is the administrative type of calls like how much is my impound fees I think was the exact quote. All of the other calls are going to be handled from the center.

Mr. Cost- that is my understanding and the distinction being what is a dispatched call as opposed to general information.

Roger Stollard- it is going to require dispatcher interaction so that is going to go towards our call count right? Before tonight I haven't heard any of that so that is why I am here asking those questions. As an example I am concerned about a two year deal, an open ended two year deal.

David Greene, 1791 Olympic Court- I think a number of people have raised enough questions from my perspective to say that there should be a lot of hesitation about this change. I would just add in another piece. There have been several times when the City has given or turned over services for a program to the County and there are real questions about what the results have been. The specific one I just mentioned here to give pause is transportation. Three years ago the Council discussed and had a study done illustrating the importance and the need for some form of public transportation in Licking County. On down the road a little bit after that turned the project of the potential of that over to the County which was part of Licking County Transit. I would raise serious questions and I ask you this question and people here whether people in Newark have been served very well by that transfer. Those things should give hesitation to this move.

Mr. Guthrie- I don't know if anybody else feels this way at all but it sort of seems to me that the committee is being asked to make a decision tonight and the Sheriff's office isn't even here to answer questions. To me it seems like they should be at the table in this room for questions by this committee.

Mr. Rolletta- asked this question of the Law Director: so the price is locked into the initial two years?

Director Sassen- correct

Mr. Rolletta- then after that on a yearly basis the County could request the price be changed?

Director Sassen- as could we

Mr. Rolletta- right, so what recourse would we have if the County wanted to raise the price and we didn't view that price as affordable?

Director Sassen- that is not a question I can answer I am not involved in the provision of these services. I just do the legal part.

Mr. Rolletta- ok I was just thinking that if it was a price we didn't like it's not like we could get our dispatch center back up and running overnight.

Director Sassen- I think that was considered. I don't know if anybody else wants to address it. I think that concern was definitely addressed. I think that is why the "good Faith" language was incorporated into the contract. What does that mean, how binding is that? I think it is just the representation of the sense that was conveyed to me by the

parties that were involved in the negotiations that those issues would be resolved in a good faith fashion in negotiations. If things didn't work out I can't say what the ramifications are that isn't my world.

Motion passed by a vote of 4-1 (Mr. Rolletta)

Bill Cost, Jr., Chair