



To: Honorable City Council
From: Jason Molino, City Manager *JM*
Date: November 7, 2007
Subject: Consolidation Police Dispatch

Attached please find a draft version of the Shared Municipal Service Incentives (SMSI) grant program, a Projected Batavia Dispatch Budget, and a memo from Darryl Sehm, Chief of Police.

The attached documents are the result of an internal study of consolidating the City of Batavia's police dispatch and records management systems with comparable systems used by the Genesee County Sheriff's Office (GCSO). The consolidation would result in the shutdown of the City's police dispatch operation, i.e., City police would be dispatched by the GCSO. The grant application asks for \$200,000 of funding for the City from the SMSI program.

Consolidation of Dispatch and Records Management Systems

Over the past six months the City has been studying the logistical and financial feasibility of consolidating the City's dispatch and records management system (RMS) with the systems used by Genesee County.

Genesee County Dispatch Center and New World Software

This summer Genesee County constructed a new public safety building that included a "state of the art" emergency services dispatch center. In addition, Genesee County has acquired new computer aided dispatch (CAD) and RMS software from New World Systems. As mentioned in the attached material, one benefit of having a unified and centralized dispatch and RMS is the sharing of law enforcement information. Currently the City and County have separate and incompatible RMS. Sharing of information is limited to person to person requests. With a single, centralized RMS the same information would be available to all thereby enhancing officer safety through better field information and improving investigative outcomes. There has been concern about inappropriate access to sensitive and confidential information; however both agencies will be able to control access to their own sensitive material.

With the assistance of the GCSO, the City is conducting a controlled demonstration of the New World CAD and RMS software, including mobile software used in police vehicles. The demonstration is

intended to assess the functionality of the New World software as compared to the City's current software (IMPACT). The demonstration is nearly complete and so far no major functional differences between New World and IMPACT have been observed. A final report on the outcome of the demonstration should be complete by the end of November.

The systems differ with respect to the steps or procedures required to achieve the same result. The appearance of user screens and interfaces is different, but the end result is comparable. In all, if the City were to transition to New World system there would be little material change in functionality when compared to the City's IMPACT system. Clearly, it will take time for Batavia police personnel to adjust to the New World system, but adequate training should minimize transition problems. It should be noted that so far the GCSO has reported minimal problems with the implementation of the New World system.

Currently Genesee County dispatches the City Fire Department as well as all volunteer fire and ambulance departments in the County (with the exception of LeRoy). The New World system includes records management for fire and ambulance calls. Currently the City fire department is working with the County Emergency Management Office to create the needed modules for fire and ambulance records management. Eventually the City will discontinue its current fire records management system, Fire House. This transition is at no cost to the City other than employee time to help create the needed modules.

It should be noted that the City will avoid several capital equipment costs with a consolidation of dispatch services. One substantial cost would be the upgrade of the City's current antiquated dispatch hardware. The estimated replacement cost is between \$25,000 - \$50,000.

Batavia Police Station Operations

Ancillary police service issues emerged while studying consolidated dispatch. For example, currently dispatchers are present in the building when police officers are questioning, interviewing or processing subjects. Dispatchers provide support in terms of visual and verbal contact with the police officer and the subject. They provide a redundant level of safety should the subject become uncooperative or should the officer need to request assistance. On a few occasions dispatchers have assisted police officers with gaining control of disorderly subjects. City dispatchers have no training in restraining or detaining subjects and doing so is not a job requirement. Furthermore, as a matter of liability, the practice is not condoned by City Management. Should the City dispatch consolidate with the County there will be a need, at times, to have an additional officer to assist in monitoring subjects. This may take an officer off patrol and may reduce staffing to a level below four officers on the road. However, the City has two additional law enforcement agencies, Genesee County Sheriff's Department and NYS Trooper Troop "A", abutting the City line and the City can request mutual aid if assistance is needed on patrol.

Lastly, the Police Department would only be open for walk in traffic during business hours. When compared to other municipal services, such as the Clerk's Office, which has considerably more walk in traffic, any resident will still be able to obtain necessary documents in person during the work day or by mail or phone.