



AGENDA ITEM MEMORADUM

Town Manager

Department

Connie Hoffmann

Department Director

COMMISSION MEETING DATE (*) - 7:00 PM	Deadline to Town Clerk
<input type="checkbox"/> May 8, 2012	April 27
<input type="checkbox"/> May 22, 2012	May 11
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> June 12, 2012	June 1
<input type="checkbox"/> June 26, 2012	June 15
<input type="checkbox"/> July 10, 2012	June 29
<input type="checkbox"/> July 24, 2012	July 13

*Subject to Change

- Presentation Reports Consent Ordinance
- Resolution Quasi-Judicial Old Business New Business

FY2012 DESIGNATED HIGH PRIORITY ITEM - PRIORITY TOPIC

SUBJECT TITLE: CONSOLIDATION OF EMERGENCY CALL OPERATIONS

EXPLANATION: As I advised the Commission at the April 24th meeting, I am serving on the County's I Committee, an advisory committee to the County Commission on how to implement the consolidation of emergency communication functions and call centers in Broward County. (All of the County's city managers were invited to serve on the committee.) The Committee decided to take up the funding issue for a consolidated emergency call taking and dispatch operation first.

Current Funding Arrangements

A bit of background on the current funding of emergency communications is in order.

The County Charter provides that the County "with cooperation from Municipalities shall establish a countywide communications infrastructure for fire and emergency medical services. The County shall provide funding for the communications infrastructure and all service providers will utilize elements of the communications infrastructure." The County interprets that to mean that are responsible only for the equipment, software, etc. to receive 911 emergency calls for fire and emergency medical services. They do not accept responsibility for the costs associated with dispatching emergency calls. According to an earlier Committee's work, the County receives substantial money from the levy on telecommunications lines for 911 services (approximately \$10 million). About \$3.5 million goes for infrastructure support and expenses; the remaining \$6.5 million is distributed to the various PSAPs operating in the County to help offset their call-taking operational costs.

Since BSO's budget is part of the County's budget, the County effectively pays for all emergency call taking and dispatching services to some cities (such as LBTS) who receive those services from BSO for no remuneration



from the city. The following cities enjoy receiving emergency dispatch service from BSO at no direct cost to the city:

Cooper City
Dania Beach
Davie
Hallandale Beach
Hillsboro Beach
Lauderdale-by-the-Sea
Lauderhill
Lazy lake
Lighthouse Point
Miramar (although they have their own Fire PSAP & fund it)
North Lauderdale
Oakland Park
Parkland
Pembroke Park
Sea Ranch Lakes
Southwest Ranches
Tamarac
Weston
West Park

The following cities have BSO operating their PSAPS, but must pay the County for those services:

Pompano Beach
Fort Lauderdale
Wilton Manors (via Fort Lauderdale's PSAP, I believe)

Pompano and Fort Lauderdale used to have agreements with the County under which the County paid for their PSAPs, but the County pulled the plug on their funding in the past two years.

Deerfield Beach pays the County for Fire dispatch services (provided by BSO) but gets their police dispatch services for free from BSO.



The following cities operate their own dispatch centers and pay for them:

Coconut Creek
Coral Springs
Hollywood
Margate
Pembroke Pines
Plantation
Sunrise

Whether the cities that operate their own PSAPs do get funds from the County's 911 dollars for call taking operations is unclear to me. But, nevertheless, the system is inherently unfair to many cities. That, plus the desire on the part of police and fire professionals to improve the dispatch technologies and public safety, is what is driving the move to consolidation. Several cities – most outspoken is Coral Springs – feel they run a more efficient and effective PSAP than BSO does and are leery of the consolidation movement and loss of control of those services, but strongly oppose the current system in which they receive no money from the County for these services when other cities are subsidized by the County.

I Committee Deliberations on Funding

It is clear that the predominant thinking on the Committee is that emergency communications are a regional function and that the County should take responsibility for funding it, however, it is equally clear that the County has no intention of doing so. So after repeated and somewhat frustrating efforts to convince the County differently on that issue, the Committee has begun to debate how a consolidated operation should be funded given the County's intransigence on the matter. In those discussions, the County Administrator has indicated that she believes the County Commission will agree to maintain their current level of funding for emergency communications services (including the money that is currently in the BSO budget).

The precursor to the I Committee recommended that the County maintain its current level of funding in a consolidated system, and that the County set up a MSTU (Municipal Services Taxing Unit) and levy an ad valorem tax to all property owners who reside in cities who participate in the consolidated system to fund the rest of the costs. I and several other city managers expressed concern with that methodology because our city property owners would be paying based on property values and not on the level of demand we place on the emergency call center. We are a city with a relatively low call volume and our residents would effectively be subsidizing other cities. Of course, the cities that would be subsidized argue that is the nature of ad valorem taxes and richer cities should subsidize poorer ones. (And since we've been subsidized so long by getting our



service via the Sheriff's Office at no fee, while other cities are bearing the cost of their own PSAPs, we've lived on both sides of the fence.)

At the last meeting, Fort Lauderdale City Manager Lee Feldman proposed a funding mechanism that I believe makes sense. He suggested that the County continue to put in all the money they currently do for emergency communications, and that the cities be given a choice of participating through the County MSTU (i.e. via an ad valorem levy on their city's property owners) or pay into the consolidated system an amount equal to their prorated share of the costs based on call volume. The idea is illustrated in the attached diagram. Cities would have to sign a long-term interlocal agreement to be part of the consolidated system, but would choose their funding mechanism every five years.

The I Committee members agreed to take this concept back to our respective governing bodies and report back to the I Committee our city's position on the matter.

It would be to the financial benefit of our Town's taxpayers to choose the per call funding mechanism. We would have to include the cost in the Town's ad valorem levy, but we would insure that our residents were not paying more than their fair share of the cost that way.

Commission Direction

I believe we have to recognize the inherent inequity of the current funding system and agree to participate in a system that is fair, although we are a beneficiary of the current inequitable system. The County Commission has made it clear that they will not allow the inequitable system to continue so, sooner or later, our taxpayers will have to pay the price of the services we are receiving (just as we finally did on police services).

I recommend that the Commission give me direction to advise the I Committee that we are in support of the Feldman Alternate Revenue Proposal.

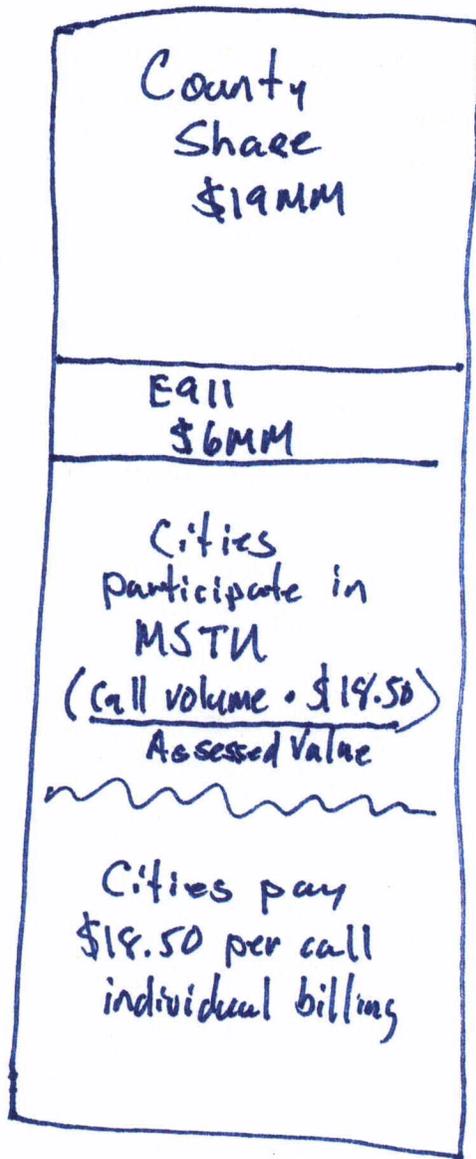
EXHIBITS: Alternate Revenue Proposal dated 5/25/2012

Reviewed by Town Attorney
 Yes No

Town Manager Initials CLB

ALTERNATE REVENUE PROPOSAL

5/25/12



CURRENT System
\$53MM
Proposed System
\$42MM

\$18.50/call
\$11.30/call

- * Cities opt in or out of system
- * Every 5 years those in can switch payment method.
- * Price per call would be adjusted upon consolidation