

# PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MINUTES

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July 1, 2015  
Borough Hall  
7:00 p.m.

## In Attendance

Don Grell	Mayor Scott	Bob Pine	Borough Residents
Robin Guido	Chief Margeson	Bob Shively	County Personnel
Perry Heath	Lt. Latshaw	Larry Thomas	Owen Snyder
Matt Madden	Det. Sgt. Freedman	Jim Hertzler	CPD Officers
Sean Shultz	Matt Candland	Gary Eichelberger	
Dawn Flower	Debra Figueroa	Barb Cross	
Linda Ceconello	Mark Malarich	Jeff Snyder	

Chairman Don Grell called the July Public Safety Meeting to order. The meeting is to evaluate the transition of CPD Dispatch to County Dispatch which became effective on August 4, 2014.

## Introduction and Background

- A. Chief Margeson stated that the Public Safety Committee had requested a status report in reference to the transition of CPD Dispatch to Cumberland County Dispatch. It was a major change for both CPD officers and Cumberland County 911.

## Costs

- B. Chief Margeson stated that there were costs involved with the transition. New radios needed to be acquired at a cost of \$260,000 which was a one-time Capital purchase. A new Records Management System needed to be acquired. It was noted during the evaluation period, prior to switching to County, that the existing radios would likely need to be replaced. The police station would also be closed between 11:00 a.m. and 7:00 a.m., eliminating the 11-7 dispatcher.

- C. Radio System Coverage

Lt. Latshaw stated that the approval of new radios occurred two years ago. A radio study done by SSC determined that there were dead spots in some Borough buildings so a bi-directional antenna (BDA) was installed at the Carlisle Police Department and the Sewer Treatment Plant to help with the dead spots. The change to these Harris radios occurred in July 2014. The CPD officers are still continuing to find dead spots in some buildings even with the V-Tacs on (Carlisle Area School District and Dickinson College)

Lt. Latshaw commended the help of Brian Hamilton with the transition. He was very helpful with fleet maps and training and use of the new radios.

Lt. Latshaw also commented that there is an adjustment for CPD officers with dead spots and the constant County chatter by other County police departments. The one good thing about the new radios is the interoperability between Borough and Township police departments, more so from other departments than the CPD.

D. Records Management System (RMS)

Det. Sgt. Freedman stated that the CPD's old RMS was Metro through the Harrisburg City Police Department. The CPD has used that since 1998. The CPD recommended C-Net, because it is widely used by most of the County police departments. It was less expensive than any of the RMS's on the market. Det. Sgt. Freedman also stated that C-Net is slow and burdensome, and not user-friendly. Good news is that C-Net did receive grant money for additional upgrades. Det. Sgt. Freedman was nominated to be on the steering committee to help with the upgrades once the grant money is available.

CPD officers have experienced this system to be very slow. Each time a field needs to be complete on the screen, the system needs to be refreshed each time.

On the positive side, C-Net is connected to Penn DOT records, mug shots from the prison, so officers can have access to these types of information.

E. Calls for Service

Chief Margeson stated that there was a concern that there would be an increase in calls for service. Since the Borough retained two dispatchers (7-3 and 3-11), the CPD dispatchers are accepting phone calls from citizens that are not an emergency situation, that accounts for 16.9% of the calls. There is a 2.4% increase in calls for service, which is a minimal increase. Calls for Service will continue to be monitored and tracked.

F. Dispatch Operations

Sgt. David Miller stated that the CPD are one of 99 entities that Cumberland County dispatch for. He stated there have been delays in dispatching CPD officers, officers have received incomplete information, officers are sent to the wrong addresses. CPD personnel speak with and have met with County 911 Director Bob Shively, who has been cooperative and responsive to the CPD complaints.

Sgt. Miller stated that he is a 19-year veteran of the police force. He stated that the CPD officers want to help the residents of the Borough but he is very concerned about

the path that we are going due to the dispatch transition.

Sgt. Miller states, I take you to Dec. 13, 2014. County dispatches CPD for shots fired at 712 Hamilton Court. CPD officers arrive at that location. 712 Hamilton Court address does not exist in the Borough of Carlisle. CPD officers ask County for the address again, County states, yes, that is the correct address. CPD officers are in the vicinity of Hamilton Court. One CPD officers references the CAD from County and determines that 712 Hamilton Court is in Upper Allen Twp. 15 minutes have passed since the original call came in, thus, officers at Upper Allen Twp. are 15 minutes behind on this call.

Sgt. Miller states, I take you to Dec. 17, 2014. CPD officers are dispatched by County to go to 315 Ash Avenue. A crisis worker is with a patient who has threatened the crisis worker. CPD officers arrive in the area of Ash Avenue, but determine, there is no 315 Ash Avenue. CPD officers question County on the number and County begins to argue with CPD personnel. County did not keep the caller on the phone to get more information. CPD personnel look into the CAD for any information that County might have added to the call. CPD personnel contact five (5) different mental health agencies in the area to ask if any of their workers had notified them about being threatened. To this day, this crisis worker has not been found.

Sgt. Miller states I take you to Feb. 24, 2015. County dispatches CPD officers to the Gingerbread Man for shots fired. Officers arrive at the Gingerbread Man. A man is holding another man down with his firearm at the suspect. A CPD officers determines that this person who is holding down the suspect is a "real police officer" by the way he is holding the suspect down and the firearm. It was later found out that three (3) calls were made by other people at the G-Man to County that there was a Coast Guard Investigator holding this person at gun point until CPD personnel arrived. The one caller was the girlfriend of the Investigator. County did not relay this information to CPD personnel. If it wasn't for the CPD officer recognizing the man on top of the suspect was not the bad guy, he might have been shot.

Sgt. Miller commented that the way County dispatches is entirely different from what CPD personnel were used to. CPD had one-on-one with CPD dispatchers. They were able to stay on the line with the caller, they were part of the incident and stayed on the radio and phone to give pertinent information to the officers until they arrived on scene.

Sgt. Miller stated that wrong addresses have been given out, wrong last names, not enough information given to the officer. He said it is embarrassing to go to the wrong location or speak with someone who never called the police.

Sgt. Miller stated that the first call coming into County is like a "hot potato," County only wants to get rid of that call. They do not want to be part of the entire process of the call.

Sgt. Miller was questioned on why there aren't more examples of problems. He said he

expects these mistakes to happen on a daily basis on his shift. He and his platoon do not have the time to log every mistake.

Sgt. Miller stated he is not bashing County. He knows these people and likes all of them, he is making them aware of the errors so they can be corrected and not happen again.

#### G. Conclusion

Chief Margeson concluded by saying that CPD personnel meet/talk with County officials frequently, sometimes on a daily basis about the issues CPD are experiencing. County officials are very responsive and we hope to work through the problems to get resolutions.

#### H. Cumberland County Control Comments

Larry Thomas, Chief County Clerk stated that the County welcomed the transition. He stated that CPD would receive the same level of service that all Cumberland County police departments receive.

The concerns made by CPD have been addressed by County and corrective measures were made.

Mr. Thomas stated that the County received 12 complaints in 2015, with 11 coming from Carlisle.

Bob Shively, Director of Cumberland County 911 stated he and his team are open to the concerns of the CPD and work and will work cooperatively to find solutions to the problems. He commented on stats to include between January-May, 2015, there was a 15% increase in calls. P.D. West receives 37% of calls. P.D. East receives 71% of calls.

Megan Silverstrim, County media spokesperson stated that cell phone tracking technology and street mapping enhancements have resulted in 3 favorable outcomes.

The 3 outcomes were the kidnapping of two children due to cell phone tracking, a bank robbery, County was able to give up-to-date information and the shooting on E. Louthier Street, County was able to give pertinent information to officers on these 3 incidents.

Active incidents are "hot called" in the system and are prioritized.

CPD's list of problems so far in 2015, were brought to County's attention along with 2014 incidents. Specific actions were taken by County.

Councilmember Matt Madden stated when there are issues, he would like to see corrective steps being taken and a mutual satisfaction outcome reached.

Councilmember Ceconello asked Chief Margeson if the dispatch service was better under the previous system or County's. Chief Margeson stated that it was a luxury to have our own dispatch. Now, we are 1 of 99 departments who are being dispatched by County Control. He also stated that the County and our previous dispatch both have different dispatch methodologies.

Larry Thomas, Chief County Clerk stated that Cumberland County Control will be going to "silent dispatch" next year, which means that dispatchers will be able to deal with true emergencies between police, fire and EMS, because the non-emergency calls will be filtered to the silent dispatch.

Bob Shively reported that County receives between 850/900 calls on a daily basis which result in 632 incidents per day.

## II. Questions or Comments from Council

Councilmember Robin Guido thanked the CPD officers for their understanding, patience and cooperation and thanked the County for their patience and understanding.

Mayor Scott echoed Councilmember Guido's message and stated he is looking for the best possible public safety solutions. One solution he is asking for is for more County dispatchers to ride along with CPD officers.

Councilmember Flower stated that CPD needs to conform to County protocol.

Councilmember Ceconello read a prepared statement about the lack of confidence in the CPD from the North East Street neighbors due to the shots fired incidents in the last week. Residents in that neighborhood are frustrated and scared by these incidents.

## III. Questions or Comments from the Public

Henry Treffinger, 6 Stewart Drive, Carlisle, PA. Mr. Treffinger stated he has been opposed to the transition from the beginning and has always been concerned about officer safety. He stated that CPD went from a 1 on 1 dispatch to 1 to 99. He stated that officer's safety is being jeopardized by delays from County and officers not given vital information.

Mr. Treffinger asked Sgt. Miller to step forward and ask this question. Do you feel more safe, less safe or the same since transitioning to County? Sgt. Miller's answer was less safe.

Curtis Hetrick, 319 E. North Street, Carlisle, PA. Mr. Hetrick asked Chief Margeson if Accreditation was in jeopardy due to the transition? Chief Margeson stated, no.

Mr. Hetrick stated he is from the East Side Neighborhood Association and he and his fellow neighbors are concerned about the last 2 weeks in which shots have been fired in their neighborhood.

Vonnie Turnbaugh, 140 N. East Street, Carlisle, PA. Ms. Turnbaugh stated she called County and reported that she observed a man with a gun walking down her street. She asked, is this legal? County asked her if she wanted to speak with a police officer, she said yes. County contacted CPD dispatcher with this call. County gave CPD the wrong first name, the wrong last name and the wrong phone number. CPD dispatcher was not able to return the call.

Ms. Turnbaugh stated that this date (July 1, 2015), two shots were fired this morning on her street. She stated this is a problem that is mushrooming. Ms. Turnbaugh is concerned that when she contacts County, CPD officers will not be given the correct information from County.

Mr. Shively apologized to Ms. Turnbaugh for the wrong information given to CPD. Ms. Turnbaugh stated that the last 4 digits of her phone number are 0123, but it was the first 3 digits that County got wrong.

It was determined that when Ms. Turnbaugh called County, that the County dispatcher assumed she was asking a legal question. She asked, is that legal? The County dispatcher took that as a legal question.

Kenneth Miller, 37 W. Chapel Avenue, Carlisle, PA. Mr. Miller stated he called County on a recent incident in which he was giving County real time information on a suspected robbery when they got cut off. It took a 5 minute delay to get back to County.

Mr. Miller also stated that he called County 3 weeks ago about a drug deal arrest. The call cannot be located in C-Net or by County.

Mr. Miller questioned whether the savings of \$55,000 to transfer to County Dispatch was worth it. He stated that CPD Dispatch was not broken. He stated that \$55,000 is worth the safety of CPD officers and the residents of the Borough. He stated he thinks the one on one dispatching was better than the 1 to 99 ratio. He also stated he has lived in other areas and has found that the Carlisle Police Department is the best that he has dealt with.

Councilmember Cecconello asked Mr. Shively what kind of training a County dispatcher receives. Mr. Shively stated that the dispatcher receives 2,000 hours in dispatch training along with class room training, priority calls, mental health issues, and legal issues.

Councilmember Cecconello stated she went through a training session where she works to develop listening skills and interview techniques, perhaps County can look into that type of training.

Linda Lepner, 120 N. East Street, Carlisle, PA. Ms. Lepter stated she heard the gun shots in her neighborhood and is deathly afraid of living in her neighborhood now.

Chief Margeson asked her to attend the East Side Neighborhood Association upcoming meeting and perhaps this neighborhood can be combined with them.

With no other business to report, the meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra Lorence  
Administrative Assistant

## Public Safety Meeting 7/1/15

On June 25 Council and other staff received an email from a borough resident.

(Read portions of email from N. East St. resident)

Myself along with numerous residents around 157 N East St Carlisle are frightened by the recent violence arising from this home.

Wednesday at 1am we are all awakened by an outbreak of gunfire.

Apparently per your department post on Facebook some of the shots were from a semi-automatic rifle. Is that an AK47?

Two weeks ago residents were awakened by gunshots.

Three to four weeks ago numerous neighbors reported the teenager at that address standing on the sidewalk brandishing an AK47 assault rifle.

Myself along with ALL the other FRIGHTENED neighbors would like to know what is going to be done to ensure our SAFETY???

Most all the neighbors have lost confidence in the Carlisle Police

Department. Tuesday afternoon before the late night shooting spree one neighbor called the police numerous times reporting the teen wandering the street with a handgun.

This is very disturbing to me; our residents have lost confidence in our police department. That is not what I want to hear; I consider our police department to be the best; our officers demonstrate their concern over the safety in the community every day. But they can't do their job unless the information they receive is accurate and timely.

Yes, when we had our own dispatch mistakes were made; sometimes we hear about the mistakes, sometimes we don't. BUT I have never heard a resident express a lack of confidence in our department.

Yes, we may only have one dispatcher on duty at a time dispatching our officers; they know the community and they know the officers. Our dispatcher can assist in delivering services by the use of our cameras and alert the officers to any additional information as they proceed to an incident. This is not so at county.

It would not matter if you had 1 dispatcher or 25 dispatchers at county dispatch; with the volume of calls that come in you still can only answer one call at a time.

We were told from the beginning we would receive the same service as everyone else that uses county dispatch for service. Maybe I was naïve, but I expected better than what we are getting.

I have received complaints about county dispatchers being rude; one caller reported to me that the next time she is not going to try to be a good citizen when she observes a young man throwing lit firecrackers into trash cans at a local shopping area. Due to the rudeness of the dispatcher she is reluctant to call county dispatch again with a report.

Carlisle Police Department has an authorized compliment of 31 officers; currently we have 30 sworn officers until the next civil service test is given in August. There are 4 officers off with injuries; that brings us to 26 officers to cover 24/7. That figure does not include court, illness or vacation.

The summer is here, crime in Carlisle is up and confidence is down. Where should we go from here?

I spoke to Chief Margeson and was told Carlisle has its own county radio channel. Can our dispatchers use the channel to dispatch our officers and still maintain interoperability with other agencies? I was told this is possible.

My suggestion would be to have 24/7 dispatch from the Carlisle Police Department; we do not have to purchase new radios or equipment and I believe provide better service to our community. I said from the beginning closing the police station between 11pm -7am would be a mistake; do we think nothing bad happens between those hours; the criminals are asleep so they can rest up for the next day? I don't think so.

When the transfer was discussed last year Mr. Candland stated that response would be 30 seconds faster and sometimes seconds count. We have found that it is not faster and has created a much longer response time.

We have said that Carlisle is different than other communities served by County Control (Cumberland/Fulton etc.) this is not a one size fits all situation.

Let's do something before someone gets hurt or killed.

