

CITY OF OAKLAND
AGENDA REPORT

FILED
OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK
OAKLAND

2009 SEP 17 PM 7:17

TO: Office of the City Administrator
ATTN: Dan Lindheim
FROM: Police and Fire Departments
DATE: September 29, 2009

RE: Receive an Informational Joint Report from the Oakland Fire Department and the Oakland Police Department Describing the Up Front and Ongoing Costs, Immediate and Long Term Savings, Potential Grant Funding Opportunities, Challenges, and Benefits of An Independent But Combined Dispatch Center with Options for Implementation Including a Timeline With Phases

SUMMARY

This informational report outlines estimated costs associated with immediate and long term savings, potential grant funding opportunities, challenges, and benefits of an independent but combined dispatch center, with options for implementation, including a timeline with phases. In an effort to provide a range of possible options, this report approaches the feasibility of a combined dispatch center using three models 1) combined, under the direction of a non-police or fire director, 2) independent but combined, and 3) police or fire managed combined center. The cost analysis presented in this report should be viewed as an estimate only. Staff is unable to ascertain exact costs without the aid of an independent consultant to assist in establishing the specific requirements for implementation of a joint facility.

FISCAL IMPACT

The information contained in this section is provided as a cost estimate only; it is not possible for staff to provide a total cost for a police and fire dispatch consolidation project at this time due to the technical and specialized knowledge required to provide an accurate estimate. Obtaining a more accurate analysis would require the services of an independent consultant to examine the feasibility of implementing a joint police and fire dispatch operation and determine the actual costs, benefits, advantages and disadvantages of combining or consolidating City of Oakland dispatch operations. The cost of hiring an independent consultant to analyze this joint venture is estimated at up to \$100,000. If it is the desire of Council to proceed in that direction, staff is prepared to conduct a Request for Proposals process.

The information presented below details some of the known costs associated with the three joint operation models, including training requirements, equipment needs, and related costs.

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Expense	Option 1 Joint Dependent Operations Civilian Manager	Option 2 Joint Independent Operations Police and Fire Manager	Option 3 Joint Dependent Operations Police or Fire Manager
Equipment Costs	\$812,824	\$812,824	\$812,824
*Training Costs	\$1,538,163.40	No additional	No additional
**Personnel Costs	\$200,000 (unknown)	Unknown	No additional
Construction Costs	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Estimated Total	\$2,550,987.40(unknown)	\$812,824	\$812,824

*Does not include costs associated with backfilling vacant positions.

*This would require the creation of new position equivalent to that of an Agency Director.

Equipment

<i>Technology Cost</i>	
Radio Consoles (5)	\$215,000
Network Equipment	\$ 25,000
Telephone installation/cabling	\$ 7,500
Computer hardware – Computer Aided Dispatch (9)	\$ 20,248
E-911 Consoles (Vesta Upgrade)	\$113,000
Motorola Software	\$ 25,000
Workstations (9)	\$31,500
Dictaphone Recording Equipment	\$375,000
Estimated Total	\$812,824
Note: These are budgetary estimates	

Option 1 – Dispatch Center under Direction of a Communications Manager

This option would consolidate police and fire operations in one building and require a non-sworn, independent communications manager to supervise and maintain dispatch operations for the entire facility. This would eliminate sworn control of dispatch operations and require total staff cross training to perform any and all duties as required by both agencies.

The following line item costs must be considered as up front costs to implement this model:

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Personnel and Training

The basic requirement from Police Officer Standard & Training (POST) is for dispatchers to attend a three week Dispatch Academy within the first year of service, with a one year probationary period to follow. The cost to run an in-house Dispatcher Training Academy is detailed below:

Police Dispatcher Trainee	Instructor Salary	Total
\$3,781.20 x 18 fire = \$68,061.60	\$8,037.60	\$76,099.20

The Oakland Police Department's dispatcher training program is a minimum of 40 weeks, which includes courses in Complaint Operator Skills, Service Operator Skills and Dispatch Skills. The 40 week training is done on-the-job with a communications training officer. All dispatchers are required to complete California Law Enforcement Telecommunications Systems (CLETS) training, which is conducted by a trained dispatcher. The cost to train a new police communications dispatcher is (Dispatcher Trainee is at salary step 1; training officer is top step plus 5%):

Police Dispatcher Trainee	Training Officer	Total
\$50,416.40 x 18 fire = \$907,495.20	\$58,569.00	\$966,064.20

The cost of Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD) training is approximately \$7,000 per dispatcher, which would be required for all police dispatchers (70) at a cost to the City of approximately \$490,000. Additionally, Incident Command System (ICS) training is also required at a cost of approximately \$6,000 which would cover 70 dispatchers.

Total estimated costs to cross-train all dispatchers is **\$1,538,163.40**. *This estimate does not include costs associated with backfilling vacant positions or take into consideration that existing staff are compensated at different steps. It is most likely that the actual cost will be greater depending on when the program is implemented.*

Dispatchers for police and fire are required to attend continual training courses and would need to be cross-trained in those areas as well. Police dispatchers are required to attend 24 hours of Continuance Professional Training every 18 months; fire dispatchers are also required to attend a 24 hour training annually as well as maintain a valid Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) card which is necessary to maintain their EMD certification.

Construction

In order to accommodate additional staff in the Police Communications Center at 7101 Edgewater Drive, Building 8, it is suggested that the rear wall of the Complaint Unit of the Police Communications Division be removed to provide more space. *However, this is only a preliminary assessment and would need to be more closely examined by the independent consultant and a representative of the Public Works Agency.* Additionally, wiring and networking modifications will be required to accommodate Fire Department equipment.

The total cost of construction can not be assessed at this time. In order to obtain an accurate accounting of the costs associated with *Option 1*, the Department of Information Technology (DIT) would have to work with the independent consultant as well as both Police and Fire communications personnel, and the Public Works Agency. The final cost estimate to implement this option would include any equipment upgrade and license purchasing.

Option 2 – Combined Facility but Independent Operations

This option would consolidate police and fire operations in one building but keep the dispatch operations independent; police dispatchers would receive supervision from a police commander and fire dispatchers would be managed by a fire commander. The number of personnel required for both agencies would stay the same; all training would remain the same. It should be noted that the Fire Department Dispatch Center would still be needed as a back up for both police and fire, as required by state telecommunications mandate. No cross-training would be required and supervision would remain the same for both police and fire operations. No organizational changes would be required; police operations would be managed by the Bureau of Services Deputy Chief and fire operations would be managed by a Fire Department Deputy Chief.

Personnel and Training

There would be no additional training costs or savings associated with *option 2* as operations would remain the same.

Construction (Same as *Option 1*)

Option 3 – Combined Police or Fire Managed Facility

This option would consolidate police and fire operations in one building and have either Agency assume management responsibility. This option would require the same modifications, training, and equipment needs as *Option 1*, but would not be managed by a civilian manager.

Independent Consultant

To determine the most cost effective and feasible option to achieve a joint police and fire dispatch center, the services of an independent consultant to provide an in depth analysis of the project would be required. It is estimated that the services provided by an independent consultant could cost up to \$100,000. The scope of services performed will include:

Feasibility of combining both centers:

- Total Costs
- Site Analysis
- Governance
- Organizations Structure
- Information System Requirements
- Benefits to Consolidation
- Potential Savings
- Disadvantages
- Employee Impact
- Training Needs
- Perishable Skills
- Calls for service workload estimates
- Additional Cell phone calls

Grant and Other funding Opportunities

There are several grant opportunities that could potentially provide funding for specific portions of the consolidation. For example, there are grant programs that provide training in various areas for certain types of employees or for programs that enhance worker and/or community safety. There are also grant programs that provide money for technology, a potential funding source for the anticipated computer upgrades and equipment purchases. However, it is not likely that the consolidation as an entire project would be eligible for funding under a single grant program. Some grant opportunities to consider include:

- American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) (Technology, Training, etc.)
- Department of Justice Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS)
- Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI)
- Assistance to Firefighters
- Fireman's Fund

BACKGROUND

The initial discussions around the feasibility of establishing a joint police and fire dispatch facility began approximately 10 years ago. Since that time, the issue has been discussed on numerous occasions as a possible cost saving option for the City of Oakland.

As part of the FY 2009-11 budget discussions, the Council requested information from staff detailing the reasons why the City has not moved toward a combined dispatch facility. It was explained at that time that long-term savings could be achieved; however, full implementation would require initial costs estimated to be between \$3 and \$10 million or more, which is staff's best estimate given that costs associated with construction, equipment, and backfilling of positions during the transitional process are unknown. Funding for the proposed project has not been identified, nor has an implementation plan been developed.

KEY ISSUES AND IMPACTS

In researching the feasibility of combining the City's Police and Fire dispatch centers, staff contacted other municipalities that currently operate joint dispatch facilities.

Model Cities

The **City of Chicago, IL** implemented its joint dispatch program in 1995. Dispatch operations are conducted in the same building, located at the Office of Emergency Management and Communications site; however, dispatch operations are conducted separately. The Deputy Director of Police Operations is responsible for a staff of 400 police employees, and the Deputy Director of Fire Operations is responsible for 90 fire employees. Chicago receives 16,000 – 20,000 calls per day or 5,000,000 calls for service per year. The training is divided into *call taker* and *dispatcher*; call taker training for police is 10 weeks while dispatcher training is 21 weeks.

The Deputy Director of Police is a retired Chicago police officer. The Deputy Director of Fire is a retired Chicago firefighter. Both Deputy Directors are tasked with creating a universal call taker position, which is currently in the preliminary stage of implementation. There is no current plan to cross-train the dispatcher position. The two Deputy Directors report to a Director in Chicago Mayor Dailey's office. There are no sworn positions in the dispatch operations.

The **City of Pittsburgh, PA** has been combined since 1986; it took three years for the City to combine its police, fire and EMS operations. After 23 years, the City is still not fully cross-trained, although that is the goal. The delay is caused by the significant costs associated with backfilling positions. In 2005, the City merged with the County and now services the entire County from four different zone centers, with a total staff each shift of 75 personnel spread throughout the County.

The City of St. Louis, MO conducted an RFP process to obtain an independent consultant for its project. St. Louis PD is governed by the State so it was difficult to get a governance model that would attain true consolidation. The City considered conducting operations out of a three story building, with each floor independently housing police, fire, and EMS. The City is currently researching additional real estate options. At present the City manages dispatch operations in three separate buildings, with the Police Department being the primary public safety answering point, handling over a million calls per year, serving a population of 355,000.

The City of San Francisco dispatch operations are conducted independently but are housed jointly in the San Francisco Office of Emergency Services at 1011 Turk Street, San Francisco, CA. Construction is on-going in order to place both police and fire personnel in one room. Joint dispatch operations began in this facility in 1999; police dispatch operations moved from Police Headquarters while fire dispatch operations moved from its previous location. Police dispatch personnel are all civilian employees while fire dispatch still has a battalion chief and lieutenants who work inside the dispatch center. The battalion chief acts as a liaison for fire, and a police lieutenant assigned for police; both report to a non-sworn Executive Director, who controls all dispatch operations. All sworn personnel are subordinate to the Director, who issues discipline to all dispatchers. The move into one room was supposed to occur on July 4, 2009 however, construction is behind schedule. Security for the dispatch center is performed by deputies of the San Francisco County Sheriff's Department.

Challenges and Issues

There are a number of challenges the City of Oakland will face in its quest to consolidate police and fire dispatch operations. Some of the challenges are listed below, and will not necessarily exist for each option. If *Option 2* is used, there will be no need to cross-train dispatchers which will minimize costs associated with the project. However, costs associated with moving fire dispatch operations from its current location to the Edgewater location will remain. Other challenges include:

- Costs associated with cross-training staff (approximately \$1.5 million)
- Equipment and technology upgrades and purchases
- Backfill Dispatchers (Options 1 and 3)
- Costs associated with maintaining a backup communications facility
- Additional parking spaces would be needed due to the increase of personnel being assigned to 7101 Edgewater Drive. The Public Works Agency would need to find additional parking stalls for a combined 911 center.
- Wiring of the building – Oakland Fire Department phone lines will need to be re-routed or moved to this location.
- Additional power usage is a serious concern as additional wiring or networking will be needed to ensure the building at 7101 Edgewater Drive can handle the additional wattage.

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- OFD has contractual agreements with neighboring cities (Emeryville and Piedmont) for fire and medical services. In consolidating dispatch services, we would need to ensure the ability to meet the terms of these agreements in addition to honoring mutual aid agreements. This may require additional training or special configuration that can be identified during the assessment.
- Oakland Fire Dispatch is in the final phase of becoming an Accredited Center of Excellence. As a result, there is a strong consideration in having Oakland Fire Dispatch Center become the North County dispatch alternative.
- Upgrade of 911 center facility and equipment while providing emergency services 24 hours a day.
- Construction:
 - With the addition of Fire Departmental personnel, it will require the purchase of a minimum of 25 new lockers.
 - The four monitors that Fire Department personnel currently use will require either the purchase of larger work stations or designated equipment that can hold four monitors and three computers.
 - The current location of the Oakland Fire Department back up station is separate from the Oakland Police Department Communications Division by a solid wall which should be removed in order to create a comfortable working environment.
 - A supervisor position will either need to be constructed for the Fire Dispatch Area or added to the current police communications supervisor's office. With this addition the current police communications supervisor's office would need to be increased in size (*Option 2*).
- Answering 911 calls from cell phones (increases call volume) – The Oakland Police Department is considering accepting 911 cell phone calls. At implementation the Police Department Communications Division call count will increase 40% - 70%. In reviewing the California Highway Patrol 911 log, Oakland Trunk calls from January 1, 2009 – June 30, 2009 are listed in the call summary is listed below:

Month	Calls	Busy Signal	Transfers
Jan 2009	27,713	3,978	Unknown
Feb 2009	25,146	3,319	3,012
Mar 2009	28,904	3,817	3,591
Apr 2009	27,994	4,193	3,645
May 2009	30,312	4,908	3,951
Jun 2009	28,594	4,522	3,663

Six months of statistics shows there could be a 52% average increase in 911 calls. Additional staff will be necessary to handle the expected increased call volume. The increase of fire dispatch personnel will not be sufficient to handle the anticipated work load as a combined or independent operation.

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As a combined operation, fire dispatch staff will be required to remain on the line during medical calls. In addition they are responsible for dispatching for contracted agencies. As a result of these functions Fire Dispatch Ready Time is decreased.

Due to the vacant staffing level within the Police Communications Operations the average call answering speed does not meet the State of California Call Answering Speed Recommendation of 90% calls answered in less than 10 seconds.

The following personnel issues will play a significant role in implementing *Option 1*:

- CLETS training must be completed by all dispatchers as mandated by the Department of Justice.
- Police dispatchers must successfully pass a complete Police Department background investigation, a requirement of the California Department of Justice.
- Union Issues - four unions would be affected by a consolidation: Local 1021, which represent police and fire dispatchers; Local 21, which represents police supervisors, fire senior dispatchers, and the fire dispatch supervisor; Local 55, which represents the fire fighters; and the Oakland Police Officers Association, which represents sworn police officers.
- Increased workload and the ability for some dispatchers to adjust/handle increased responsibilities. In addition, serious consideration must given to addressing issues associated with the elimination of perishable skills for both police and fire dispatchers. With total consolidation and proper cross-training, all dispatchers learning both disciplines may cause their previous skills to diminish as they are no longer performing the same duties on a daily basis. This will affect Phone Services, Service Dispatching and main Talk Group Dispatching.

Police and Fire Staffing

Authorized vs. Actual Staffing

OFD Classifications	Authorized FTE	Actual Staffing	Percent (+/-)
Fire Communications Supervisor/Manager	1	1	100%
Fire Communications Dispatcher, Senior	4	4	100%
Fire Communications Dispatcher	18	16	89%

OPD Classifications	Authorized FTE	Actual Staffing	Percent (+/-)
Lieutenant of Police	1	1	100%
Sergeant of Police	4	4	100%
Police Communications Supervisor	4	4	100%
Police Communications Dispatcher	73	62	84.9%
Police Records Specialist	0	1 (loan)	0%

Workload

OFD Calls for Service

OFD 9-1-1 Calls for Service 2008	OFD 9-1-1 Calls per Person 2008
60,000	3,000 average (20 Dispatchers)

OFD CAD Calls for Service 2008	OFD CAD Calls per Person 2008
3,000	150 calls per month (20 Dispatchers)

OPD Calls for Service

OPD 9-1-1 Calls for Service 2008	OPD 9-1-1 Calls per Person 2008
727,077	962 (63 Dispatchers)

OPD CAD Calls for Service 2008	OPD CAD Calls per Person 2008
284,570	376 calls per month (63 Dispatchers)

Police Dispatch

The Police Communications Operator position (currently inactive) was created in 1990, when the Oakland Police Department was accepted to participate in the POST Basic Dispatch program. This position was created to help with staffing shortages. The operator position was used to answer emergency and non-emergency calls for service and to work the Service Talk Group¹ channel with an experienced dispatcher. This position takes approximately 20 weeks to train. The position was used to relieve shortages on the phone by using dispatchers in training who may have been having difficulty in the Patrol Mic Training, and to give dispatchers time to concentrate on phones and the service channel instead of the main talk groups.

¹ Service Talk Group channel is a support line for the main talk groups (i.e., return calls to officers, warrant checks, etc.)

Due to staffing shortages at the Police Communications Division (currently nine vacancies), staff suggests consideration be given to re-activating this position.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Project Timeline

The timeline for combining the facilities and continuing independent or combined operations is unknown at this time, and can only be accurately projected upon conclusion of a more in-depth analysis of the project, as conducted by the independent consultant should Council determine that course. However, *Option 2* appears to be the least costly as no new training is required, but equipment upgrades and construction will still be necessary. While *Option 1* has the highest up-front costs of the options, it has the potential to achieve long term savings.

DISABILITY AND SENIOUR CITIZE ACCESS

Current Police and Fire Department dispatch facilities are ADA compliant. Any new facility would also be required to conform to State and City requirements for disabled accessibility.

SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES

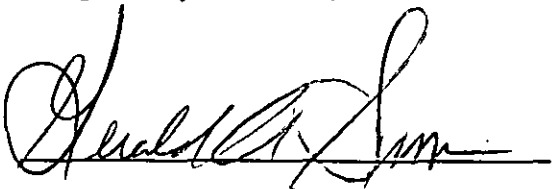
There are no specific economic, environmental, or social equity opportunities contained in this report. However, throughout the project, staff will evaluate green alternatives with construction and remodeling. Also, the most energy efficient options will be utilized with the purchase of new equipment.

RECOMMENDATION / RATIONALE

Staff recommends acceptance of this informational report.

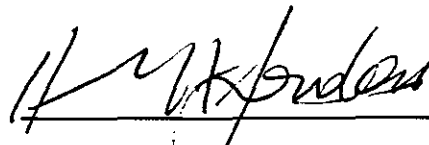
Conducting a more thorough evaluation of training, personnel, equipment, and construction costs associated with the consolidation of police and fire dispatch centers will help the City make an informed decision between the three options presented in this report. An independent consultant will be needed to achieve a true cost analysis of the entire project and implementation timeline.

Respectfully submitted,



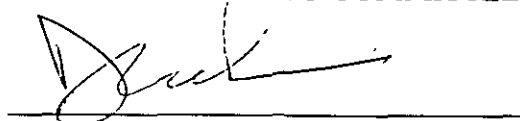
Gerald A. Simon
Fire Chief

Respectfully submitted,



Howard A. Jordan
Acting Chief of Police

APPROVED AND FORWARDED TO
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