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**CITY OF BURLINGTON**  
**Common Council Minutes**  
**Jeannie Hefty, Mayor**  
**Diahnn Halbach, City Clerk**  
**Wednesday, September 27, 2017**

1. **CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL**

Mayor Jeannie Hefty called the Special Meeting of the Common Council to Order on Wednesday, September 27, 2017 at 6:06 p.m., starting with a call of the roll. Roll Call: Present - Kott, Johnson, Grandi, Dawidziak, Vos, Schultz, Preusker and Bauman. Excused: None.

Also present: City Administrator Carina Walters, City Attorney John Bjelajac, Fire Chief Alan Babe, Police Chief Mark Anderson, Finance Director Steve DeQuaker, and Attorney Kyle Guyla.

2. **DISCUSSION**

**A. Discussion regarding Consolidated Dispatch**

Mayor Hefty opened the discussion with a reading of the rules of conduct and established the order in which individuals would be able to speak.

Walters reviewed the report compiled by staff in response to Council's request for more information of whether or not the City of Burlington should look to outsource its dispatch operations to the Racine County Communications Center (RCCC). Walters stated that staff was directed to research, analyze, and explore the implications of three different options, which included maintaining dispatch services in the City, consolidating with RCCC, or a combination of the two in which police calls would be dispatched by the City and the RCCC would dispatch fire and rescue. Walters went on to explain the challenges and opportunities of each option and then reviewed the costs associated with each of the options. Walters stated that the estimated one-time costs, plus salary and benefits for the City dispatchers over 12 years, plus the cost of additional police officers, is approximately \$7,679,777. The estimated one-time costs, plus salary and benefits of additional police officers, plus the RCCC contract over 12 years, amounts to \$4,937,771, which results in a \$2,742,006 difference over the course of 12 years. Walters further stated that by the year 2021 annual costs with RCCC will decrease by 10% each subsequent year through 2029 in which County dispatch services would then be wholly levied.

Alderman Johnson asked if the City of Burlington currently pays any taxes for County dispatch services. Walters responded that currently Burlington residents are already paying approximately \$64,000 per year on the County levy for County dispatch services.

Alderman Schultz asked for clarification on the processing of offenders and when the dispatchers watch the offenders versus the police officers. Chief Anderson replied that there are cameras and microphones inside each one of the holding facilities, so that if the officer needs to respond to another call, dispatch can monitor the cell while the police officer is away. Schultz further inquired as to other reasons somebody might end up in a cell. Chief Anderson responded that on average, the PD processes about 325 offenders and about 35 are placed into a cell each year. Chief Anderson also stated that there are typically two reasons when someone is placed into a cell; they are either waiting for bond, or waiting for County transport due to lack of available manpower. Schultz then stated he would like more information as to what data is available for the times at

which offenders are typically being held in the cells. Chief Anderson said he would get that information, however the need to hold someone in a cell typically happens after normal business hours.

Alderman Grandi asked County representatives if the City were to go to County Dispatch, what would the County's plan be for the City of Burlington and if the City would share channels with the other municipalities or have their own dedicated channel. Jackie Bratz, Director of the Racine County Communications Center, responded that details of any agreement would need to be decided on through negotiations with the other members and would also more than likely be subject to closed session discussions.

Alderman Dawidziak stated that although other communities have chosen to forego 24/7 police stations, Burlington isn't the same as many of those other communities as there are events and activities concentrated in the area and would like to see an option where the police department would stay open 24/7. Chief Anderson responded that the cost to maintain a 24/7 police station with County dispatch is similar to the costs of Option 1, which would be to keep City dispatch.

Alderman Schultz inquired as to when do most after hours walk-ins occur at the police station. Chief Anderson replied that he didn't have the specific data with him, but said there are more walk-ins around the 5:30 p.m. time versus the 2:00 a.m. time. Anderson said he would gather more information for Council's review.

Alderman Bauman stated that there has been a concern about County dispatches lack of knowledge of the area and mistakes have been made that have resulted in dispatching officers to wrong locations and asked if there have been any improvements. Chief Anderson responded that there were mistakes in the beginning but has gotten better and the complaints have been reduced. Bratz stated that mistakes happen but they are taken very seriously and additional geographical training is provided when these situations occur.

Alderman Bauman asked Chief Anderson his thoughts on Option 2, which would be moving the City to County dispatch. Chief Anderson responded that Burlington needs and should have their own dispatch and he understands this is a very difficult decision to make considering the options and data given. Chief Anderson stated that regardless of the decision, the police department is understaffed and will need two additional police officers in order to be properly staffed. Chief Anderson also stated that he is confident and trusts that the officers for the City of Burlington will continue to provide outstanding service for this community regardless of the decision. Chief Anderson further stated that there are pros and cons to both situations and if dispatch is restored, additional training would be needed as well as a bigger and stronger dispatch counsel that can handle cellular 911 calls.

Alderman Dawidziak wanted to know, if the City does go to County dispatch, how will the City ensure that residents have a safe place to go. Chief Anderson responded that the vestibule would remain open and a safe room would be available if necessary. Alderman Preusker added that he had been in contact with other police and fire chiefs in the commission and addressed some of the concerns about whether or not to keep the police department open and how to handle it. Preusker stated that the Mt. Pleasant police department gradually reduced their hours allowing residents to accustom themselves with the change a little at a time. Preusker also stated that Mt. Pleasant has a buzzer system that is linked directly to County dispatch that residents can access if necessary.

Lauri Gatto, 27109 Ora Drive, Wind Lake, WI 53185, full-time dispatcher, commented on the challenges listed in the report, which were far more for County dispatch versus City dispatch and felt the two additional police officers should be taken out of the equation because they will be hired regardless of the outcome. Gatto further stated that the cost difference is minimal and comes to about \$32 per parcel per year to keep dispatch in the City of Burlington.

Sandra Baumeister, 8355 Shady Lane, Burlington, WI 53105, full-time dispatcher, addressed the reported challenges within the Burlington dispatch and gave examples of decisions that have been made by administration that are now being considered as challenges which are now being used against the dispatchers. Baumeister stated that when Chief Nimmer ran the police department, he eliminated three part time dispatchers, one part time data entry clerk, and one full time data entry clerk, which then became the duties of

the three full time dispatchers which caused mandatory overtime. Baumeister then addressed the comments regarding unqualified staff to cover dispatch for lunches and bathroom breaks, in addition to the numerous requests for additional educational training which has been denied due to costs and scheduling conflicts. Baumeister gave a recent example of an incident that involved both dispatch locations successfully working together and suggested choosing Option 3.

Sara Spencer, 241 Henry Street, Burlington, WI 53015, part time dispatcher, stated that she has been honored to work with the Burlington Police Department and would like dispatch to stay local because it is a valuable service to the community and has worked very hard to earn a good reputation and gain a positive presence and although Option 1 costs more per year, but it's a service worth keeping and feels tax payers would choose the added expense over consolidated dispatch.

Jean Taylor, 733 Chicory Road, Burlington, WI 53105, resident, stated that she feels dispatch needs to stay local and the police department needs to stay open 24/7.

Angela Hanson, 508 W. State Street, Burlington, WI 53105, full-time dispatcher, stated that she has been a dispatcher for the Burlington Police Department for 17 years and feels the dispatch center needs to be brought back to its pre-flood status so they can continue to help the community and do what they do best and continue to serve the residents of Burlington.

Kim Hardesty, 573 S. Gail Lynne Drive, Burlington, WI 53105, dispatch supervisor, stated that based on the numbers put together by Chief Anderson and Administrator Walters, when broken down over 12 years, the additional cost per parcel per year to choose Option 1 over Option 2, which includes two additional police officers, amounts to a difference of \$59.14. Hardesty further stated that the police department needs two additional officers regardless of which option is chosen, so with that cost taken out of the equation, the per parcel per year cost amounts to only an additional \$32.40 and is worth the cost to keep the dispatch local.

Susan Riddle, 424 Storle Avenue, Burlington, WI 53105, former dispatcher for the City of Burlington, is concerned with moving to consolidated dispatch with the County and stated that it can be very difficult to get a hold of County dispatch when they are busy which delayed response time. Riddle further stated that there is more to cost than what is on paper and felt that dispatch should stay local.

Vicki View, 1322 S. Teut Road, Town of Burlington resident, stated that she is not a City of Burlington resident but favors County dispatch.

Alderman Dawidziak asked how the response times with County dispatch have been impacted since the flood. Chief Babe responded that there can be a 59 second error at any given time; however, from the data received, there has been no delay in response times with County dispatch for fire and rescue services. Chief Babe reminded everyone that they are not comparing apples to apples and that a countywide dispatch center with 51 people on staff versus a 5 1/2 person city dispatch center, will each have their own efficiencies built into one and not the other. Chief Babe further stated, in order to get a more specific answer to response times, data from the Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) should be compared to the specific dispatch time and there will be a difference for transferred 911 cellular calls. Bratz stated that the transfer to answer times were pulled for the City of Burlington calls recorded during May and June and the same for County calls recorded in the past month were pulled and noticed that the answer time to time dispatched was approximately 2 minutes 55 seconds for the City and 1 minute 30 seconds for County dispatched 911 calls.

Rachael Seils, 1620 Waukesha Road, Caledonia, WI 53108, City of Burlington Officer, stated that City dispatch provides a huge service to the City of Burlington and although County does a great job, when it comes to response time and quality of service, one of the advantages of keeping dispatch local, is that many times an officer is in the room when a call comes in and is able head towards the scene before the call is dispatched. Seils added that the police department has already lost an officer this past year and will make it even harder to lose dispatch too.

3. **ADJOURN INTO CLOSED SESSION**

**Wis. Stats 19.85(1)(e)** Deliberating or negotiating the purchasing of public properties, the investing of public funds, or conducting other specified public business, whenever competitive or bargaining reasons require a closed session.

- Deliberation of a possible Intergovernmental Agreement with Racine County for consolidated joint dispatch services.

**In addition to (and incorporating the same by reference) the above provision related to Wis. Stats 19.85(1)(e), Wis. Stats 19.85(1)(c)** Considering employment, promotion, compensation or performance evaluation data of any public employee over which the governmental body has jurisdiction or exercises responsibility.

- To consider employment and compensation of specific Police Department dispatch employees and the strategy to be adopted by the City in any future negotiations with the County if a possible joint dispatch agreement is going to be pursued.

**A motion was made by Alderman Johnson, with a second by Alderman Schultz to Adjourn into Closed Session. Roll Call: Aye - Johnson, Grandi, Dawidziak, Vos, Schultz, Preusker, Bauman, Kott. Nay - None. Motion carried 8-0. The meeting adjourned into closed session at 7:38 p.m.**

4. **RECONVENE INTO OPEN SESSION**

Consideration and possible action on recommendations for matters discussed in Closed Session by the Common Council.

**A motion was made by Alderman Dawidziak, with a second by Alderman Kott to Reconvene into Open Session. With all in favor, the meeting reconvened at 9:31 p.m.**

No action was taken, however City Administrator, Carina Walters issued the following statement:  
The City of Burlington will explore a contract with Racine County for joint dispatch services that best serves the interest of the city. The City will also explore how to fairly treat its valued dispatch staff who may be affected if the City ultimately does enter into a contract with the County.

5. **ADJOURNMENT**

**A motion was made by Alderman Preusker, with a second by Alderman Schultz to adjourn the meeting. With all in favor, the meeting adjourned at 9:34 p.m.**

Minutes respectfully submitted by:

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Diahnn C. Halbach  
City Clerk  
City of Burlington