

2021

Dispatching Solutions



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Chief of Police

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Introduction

At the Crestwood Police Department there is an immediate need for a change in how we dispatch. Currently we employ five dispatchers to cover four 12 hour shifts. One is the lead dispatcher and four others are permanently assigned to either a 12 hour day shift or a 12 hour night shift. During a 12 hour shift, one dispatcher is responsible for answering all non-emergency and 911 calls, handling customers who come to the police station, assigning radio calls for service, and entering all information from officers. Our dispatchers are excellent and can handle all of these duties on their own. The problem is that since our staffing is bare minimum, when a dispatcher is scheduled off, there is no one to cover the dispatching duties. To cover the duties, a patrol officer, who should be patrolling the City of Crestwood, is assigned to dispatch. This leaves us with three officers patrolling the city instead of four. This impacts the level of public safety service we are able to provide residents.

There are two options to solve this problem. The first is that we nearly double our dispatching staff, from five dispatchers to nine dispatchers, in order to adequately staff dispatch. The second option is to contract for dispatching services with another agency.

Current System Costs

Personnel is the majority of the costs associated with our current dispatching system. A breakdown of the costs is in the table below:

Expense	Cost
Dispatcher	\$59,332.50
Dispatcher	\$60,744.33
Dispatcher	\$58,715.68
Dispatcher	\$56,322.74
Dispatcher	\$58,931.82
REJIS Global Software	\$23,310.00
Dispatch Repairs	\$4,850.00
Total	\$322,207.07

Our current dispatching software, REJIS Global, is going through an upgrade. REJIS has signed an agreement with Motorola to change from Global Software to Motorola Premier 1. Since our software will be obsolete, we must go through the upgrade. The software change is expected by 2022. The exact cost of the upgrade is currently unknown but is anticipated to be \$26,000 per dispatch console. We have two dispatch consoles, so our total anticipated cost for dispatch console upgrade would be \$52,000. Upgrading the system in the cars is anticipated at \$1,500 per car. We have eight cars with mobile data terminals (MDTs). The cost for the cars would equal \$12,000. Total cost of the upgrade (dispatching consoles and MDTs) will be approximately \$64,000. These costs are not reflected in the above table. The annual cost of the software (currently \$23,310) is not included in the upgrade total, and that cost may increase with the upgraded system.

There are further costs that are difficult to put an exact number on, but are substantial. If an officer is covering a dispatch shift, the department is paying an officer's salary to cover the shift instead of a dispatcher's salary. Using starting salaries as an example, an officer's starting hourly wage is \$25.48,

while a dispatchers starting hourly wage is \$17.79. There is a \$7.69 hourly difference between the two positions. Most officers are paid at a rate higher than the starting salary. At a minimum, we are paying \$7.69 more per hour to cover a dispatcher's shift every time an officer dispatches.

Advantages and Disadvantages of our Current System

There are advantages and disadvantages to our current system. Our dispatch center is also known as a public safety answering point (PSAP). We are likely the smallest PSAP in the region. One advantage to having our own PSAP is being able to manage dispatch through our own policy and procedure. We dictate how we operate. A second advantage is, since a dispatcher is on-site, we have the ability to provide 24 hour customer service. If someone comes to our police station in the middle of the night, there is a person who can immediately let them into the station. Third, having our own PSAP gives us control over the hiring process, and finally, it gives us enhanced quality control.

There are disadvantages to having our own PSAP. First, it is expensive. We spend \$322,207.07 a year just on dispatch. Second, hiring is difficult. Since we have one of the smallest PSAPs, our pay is at or near the bottom of dispatchers in the area. This presents a problem hiring qualified dispatchers. In our last process we only had two eligible candidates. Third, we have our own radio frequency, and therefore no other departments share our frequency. This presents a problem with collaboration and communication with neighboring agencies. If our agency needs immediate assistance our dispatcher has to call other agencies for help. If we shared a channel with another agency, officers would instantly hear our distress and be able to assist immediately. Fourth, our current staffing in dispatch has caused a morale problem. In a recent survey, all officers cited covering dispatch as a dislike. Officers want to patrol Crestwood, not cover dispatch. Finally, having our own dispatch requires us to fund periodic equipment upgrades. As stated above, we will have to upgrade our dispatch software in the near future. It will cost us, at a minimum, \$64,000 just for the software upgrade.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Contracting Dispatch Services

Just like having our own system, there are advantages and disadvantages to contracting dispatch services. I have identified three advantages to contracting dispatch services:

1. Collaboration and mutual aid
2. Reduced costs
3. No staffing issues

The first advantage, collaboration and mutual aid, is the biggest advantage to contracting services. Being dispatched by a neighboring agency automatically increases the resources available to the community of Crestwood. Having prior experience at a department that used contracted services, I know that if my department's resources were stretched thin, every other department on our channel, without hesitation, would come help. The assistance became routine and occurred on a daily basis.

The second advantage is reduced cost. The cost is reduced significantly, which is discussed in further detail later in the proposal.

The third advantage is that there are no staffing issues. If we do not dispatch ourselves, we are no longer responsible for covering the dispatch shift. Officers are able to work their role patrolling the City

of Crestwood, eliminating the morale-harming duty of covering dispatch. We also no longer have to worry about hiring dispatchers.

I have identified four disadvantages to contracting dispatch services:

1. Less institutional control
2. Department will not be staffed 24 hours a day
3. Non-Crestwood employees answering non-emergency calls
4. Eliminating four positions

The first disadvantage is less institutional control. By not having our own dispatch we are giving up all/part of the ability to control our dispatch through policy and procedure. As you will read later in the proposal, some contracting options give us partial control. At best, we would have some say in how the dispatch operates, but it would be limited.

The second disadvantage is the police department would not be staffed 24 hours a day. The security cameras would be monitored from a remote location. If someone comes to the station after hours, they would have to use an outside call-box to speak with a dispatcher. The dispatcher would then call an officer to come meet the person at the station. Currently our dispatchers are able to immediately let them inside the station and they are greeted inside the building by a dispatcher or officer. Although this is a disadvantage, all departments contracting dispatch services operate this way.

A third disadvantage is a non-Crestwood employee will answer phone calls. The disadvantage here is that the call taker may not have as extensive knowledge of the city as our current dispatchers. I do believe if we contracted services, over time, that knowledge will come.

Finally, the most significant disadvantage is eliminating four positions. We currently employ five dispatchers. A new role within the department would be created if we contract services, ergo eliminating four positions instead of five. The new role would be filled with an existing dispatcher. This new role is discussed in further detail later in the proposal. Steps will be taken to ensure these employees receive assistance finding new employment and we should consider severance packages.

The Solutions

Solution 1: Expanding our Current Dispatch System

The greatest disadvantage in having our own dispatch is having officers cover dispatch during absences. When an officer is taken out of their role, patrolling the City of Crestwood, to cover a different role, we are not providing the expected level of service. From my first day, January 19, through February 19, officers had to cover dispatch 12 out of 31 days (39%). 39% of the time we are not providing an optimal level of service. I find that to be unacceptable. I define an optimal level of service as people giving peak performance in their assigned roles. An optimal level of service should be offered to our community 100% of the time, not 61% of the time.

For us to accomplish the goal of optimal service under our current system, 100% of the time, we must expand our dispatch from five dispatchers to nine dispatchers. Adding four more dispatchers would assign two dispatchers per 12 hour shift. This allows for coverage during scheduled absences. Only one

dispatcher per shift would be approved time off. This eliminates officers covering dispatch shifts and keeps people assigned to their roles.

There are substantial costs associated with this solution. Using the average salary/benefits for our current dispatch staff (\$58,809.41), salaries would increase, at a minimum, by \$235,237.66. We currently spend \$294,047.07 on dispatcher salary/benefits. Using the average salary increase our total salary/benefits for nine dispatchers would be, at a minimum, \$529,284.73. There are further costs, four extra uniform costs totaling \$1,856, additional licensing fees through REJIS, additional training costs, and additional hiring costs. There would also be the additional dispatch software upgrade in 2022, totaling, at a minimum \$64,000. We do have two dispatch consoles so there would be no extra expenses to expand our dispatch center.

Solution 2: Contracting Dispatch Services

Contracting dispatch services involves the City of Crestwood signing an agreement with an outside agency to provide dispatch. How the city is charged depends on the outside agency, but most charge by billable calls for service. The Crestwood Police Department averages around 14,000 billable calls for service per year. Most agencies use two years of data to decide cost. Costs can fluctuate depending on how many billable calls for service the department has per year. Some agencies will provide 24 hour security camera monitoring, which includes monitoring prisoners inside our jail. All will answer both non-emergency and 911 calls.

I have set a criteria for contracting dispatch services. There are two criteria:

The contracting agency must provide a similar level of professional service for the City of Crestwood

- Dispatchers must be professional and our response time goal of under three minutes must remain the same. The community should not notice a change.

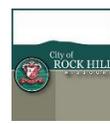
The contracting agency must border the City of Crestwood

- Sharing a border will decrease response time if assistance is needed. Crestwood borders Sunset Hills, unincorporated St. Louis County, Webster Groves, and Kirkwood/Oakland.

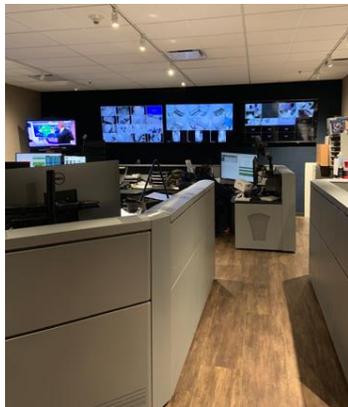
Using this criteria, there are four agencies we could use for dispatch, Kirkwood Police Department, East Central Dispatch Center (ECDC), St. Louis County Police Department, and Sunset Hills Police Department. All provide a professional level of service and all agencies border, or have jurisdictions that border the City of Crestwood.

I was able to obtain bids from three of the four agencies. Kirkwood was unable to provide a bid because they recently expanded their dispatch services. They now dispatch for themselves, Glendale Police Department, Warson Woods Police Department, and Des Peres Public Safety. Four agencies is their maximum.

East Central Dispatch Center



East Central Dispatch Center (ECDC) is a multi-jurisdictional center for emergency communications concerning police, fire, and emergency medical services. ECDC was formed in 2002 through an intergovernmental agreement. Originally five cities formed the agreement, Clayton, Richmond Heights, Maplewood, Shrewsbury, and Webster Groves. ECDC's official operations began in 2004. In 2005 Olivette joined ECDC. Finally, in 2014 Brentwood and Rock Hill joined, giving ECDC its current total of eight participating jurisdictions.



East Central Dispatch Center services an area population of 82,358 covering 19.5 square miles. During a shift ECDC is dispatching for over 80 police officers and 50 firefighters. ECDC is located in the Richmond Heights Public Safety building. They recently went through a remodel and upgraded all of their equipment. Currently there are two police radio channels, ECDC North (four jurisdictions) and ECDC South (four jurisdictions). Each fire department has their own radio channel.

ECDC is governed by a Board of Directors. The Board of Directors consists of each member City's City Manager/Administrator. The Board of Directors approves the annual budget and governs the overall operations. The Chairman of the Board rotates every two years. The

Board of Directors meets quarterly and their budget year is July through June. There are also two committees, one for police and one for fire. Those committees consist of the Police Chiefs and Fire Chiefs of the participating jurisdictions. ECDC is managed by Paul Jokerst, Executive Director and Kurt Ploch, Deputy Director. Staff includes 24 dispatchers, who dispatch for police, fire, and emergency medical services.

ECDC provides law enforcement with MULES and REJIS inquiries and houses city warrants for five (5) of the participating law enforcement agencies. Along with answering emergency and non-emergency calls, the center also monitors various panic alarms placed through city facilities. By the sharing of resources, ECDC provides each member city with a cost-sharing approach made possible through the consolidation of dispatch services and creates a more efficient level of service (www.east-central.org/about/).

Deputy Chief Mike Ford and I spoke with Executive Director Paul Jokerst and Deputy Director Kurt Ploch about Crestwood Police Department contracting dispatch services with ECDC. With Board of Director approval Director Jokerst said they could dispatch for our department. If they dispatched for our agency they would propose having three radio channels instead of two. Our channel would include Crestwood, Webster Groves, and Shrewsbury. This satisfies criteria two, we must be dispatched by a neighboring jurisdiction. Crestwood and Webster Groves share a significant border.

ECDC requires a yearly contract. They require six week notice if an agency wants to end the contract. The agency is still financially responsible until the contract expires. We would be responsible for moving our dispatching equipment to ECDC. Another agency, in a similar situation as ours, was recently exploring contracting with ECDC. That agency was quoted \$22,000 to change over from their own dispatch to ECDC. This charge covers the technical change over. Director Jokerst did not have an exact figure for our change over. We should expect a figure close to \$22,000.

Director Jokerst is currently proposing a budget change for ECDC. His proposal includes expanding staff from 24 dispatchers to 28 dispatchers and giving the dispatchers a 17% raise to make them more competitive with other dispatching agencies. Director Jokerst’s quote for services includes his five year plan for rate increases. If his budget proposal is not approved by the board our rate would remain around the year one cost. Their cost is based on a two year average of billable calls for service. The quote included the annual cost for the current eight participating agencies. The quote is below:

	2020/2021	Year 1 2021/2022	Year 2 2022/2023	Year 3 2023/2024	Year 4 2024/2025	Year 5 2025/2026
Brentwood	\$324,798.11	\$415,043.24	\$466,525.10	\$505,969.24	\$507,969.24	
Clayton	\$377,921.73	\$345,347.40	\$388,184.21	\$421,004.72	\$421,004.72	
Crestwood		\$180,144.53	\$202,489.61	\$219,609.86	\$220,106.48	
Maplewood	\$356,761.76	\$315,121.44	\$354,209.03	\$384,156.97	\$384,156.97	
Olivette	\$159,122.32	\$148,603.70	\$167,036.46	\$181,159.19	\$181,159.19	
Richmond Heights	\$359,023.58	\$339,083.86	\$381,143.75	\$413,368.00	414,303.77	
Rock Hill	\$87,962.18	\$78,358.01	\$88,077.52	\$95,524.37	\$95,740.38	
Shrewsbury	\$216,471.32	\$197,508.72	\$222,007.66	\$240,778.13	\$241,322.62	
Webster Groves	\$500,349.65	\$453,915.44	\$510,219.01	\$553,357.41	\$554,608.75	
	\$2,382,410.65	\$2,473,126.34	\$2,779,892.34	\$3,014,928.88	\$3,021,746.76	Not Projected

ECDC’s cost does include more than just dispatch services. It provides access to house prisoners at the Richmond Heights jail for no more than 48 hours per prisoner. The Richmond Heights jail holds a maximum of 24 people. ECDC will also verify all of our city warrants. A copy of all warrants is held at ECDC which allows verification. We are provided access to their reporting systems. They will also produce reports for our department.

ECDC satisfies both criteria, but does so at a premium. Out of the three proposals, ECDC costs the most by a substantial margin.

St. Louis County



St. Louis County currently has 19 coordinated communications service agreements with municipalities throughout St. Louis County. Some of the municipalities they service include, Ellisville, Eureka, Lakeshire, and Chesterfield. They also have 17 computer assisted report entry (CARE) contracts with municipal police departments, which includes Crestwood. The St. Louis County Bureau of Communications services a population of 532,091. Captain Pete Marrow commands the Bureau, which has a total

of 91 authorized staff. During a 24 hour period there are 13 dispatchers on duty during the day, 14 dispatchers on afternoons, and 12 on midnights. In 2019 they handled 349,386 administrative calls and 343,829 9-1-1 calls, totaling 693,215 phone calls.

The Bureau of Communications is located in the St. Louis County Emergency Operations center, 1150 Hanna Rd. Ballwin, Mo 63021. The 30,000 square foot facility also houses St. Louis County Emergency Management. The Bureau has 17 radio positions and 21 9-1-1 positions. The Bureau of Communications is accredited through the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA). In 2020, during their fourth accreditation assessment, they received the Accreditation with Excellence Award.



I met with Capt. Marrow and Lt. Aaron Schafer, Commander of the Municipal Services Unit to discuss contracting dispatch services for our department. St. Louis County meets our two criteria, they provide a professional level of service as evident in their CALEA accreditation and the St. Louis County 3rd Precinct borders the City of Crestwood.

All dispatching services are included in their contract. They will answer non-emergency calls and 9-1-1 calls. An after hour call box outside our police station would be answered by their call takers. Some record services are included, such as entering some information into REJIS, MULES, and NCIC “hot files.” They will not verify City of Crestwood Municipal warrants. They cannot monitor our security cameras and/or jail cells.

Their pricing is based on a hybrid model of billable calls for service and population. There is no extra cost for set-up. Lt. Schafer quoted our yearly contract price to be under \$75,000. Unfortunately, at this time, St. Louis County cannot provide us services. Their current computer aided dispatch system cannot accept another agency. They recently began services for the City of Overland, which maxed out the system. St. Louis County is in the process of upgrading their computer aided dispatch system to Motorola Premier 1. They are working with REJIS, but the upgrade is at least 12 to 18 months away. Once they upgrade the system, they would be able to service our dispatching needs.

Sunset Hills



The Sunset Hills Police Department Dispatching is identical to our dispatching. They too are their own public safety answering point (PSAP). They employ six dispatchers who work 12 hour shifts. They operate on their own radio frequency and their standard operating procedures (SOP) for dispatch are similar to our SOPs. The Sunset Hills Police Department consists of 26 officers and seven civilian employees. The Crestwood Police Department has 27 officers, and seven civilian employees. The Sunset Hill Police

Department is accredited through the Missouri Police Chiefs Association. Their dispatch center is located inside their police department, 3905 S. Lindbergh Blvd Sunset Hills, Mo 63127.

The Sunset Hills and Crestwood Police Departments have similar dispatching statistics. The tables below shows dispatching statistics for 2020 and January, 2021.

	Sunset Hills	Crestwood
Communications	2020 Total	2020 Total
Telephone Contacts	22,830	20,065
9-1-1 Calls	6,664	4,318
Radio Transmissions	129,074	118,328

	Sunset Hills	Crestwood
Communications	January, 2021	January, 2021
Telephone Contacts	1,843	1,608
9-1-1 Calls	508	332
Radio Transmissions	10,199	9,975

Lt. Kevin Avery and I met with Stephen Dodge, Chief of Police for Sunset Hills, to discuss contracting dispatch services. Chief Dodge and I had previous conversations regarding dispatch. In those previous conversations, Chief Dodge was receptive to the idea.

Prior to our meeting, Chief Dodge had explored pricing. Chief Dodge had contacted Ballwin Police Department, which went through a similar contract with Manchester Police Department. Ballwin Police Department based their pricing on dispatcher salaries. They required Manchester Police Department to cover half of the dispatcher salaries. Based on that model Chief Dodge came up with \$135,000. He asked for a 3% yearly increase, based on their typical cost of living raise. He asked for a five (5) year contract. I believe we should sign a three (3) year contract. The table below shows our cost from year one (1) through year three (3).

Year	Cost	Increase (3%)
2021	\$135,000	N/A
2022	\$139,050	\$4,050.00
2023	\$143,221.50	\$4,171.50

Sunset Hills would be responsible for monitoring our security cameras after hours and on weekends. They would also be responsible for monitoring our prisoners through remote monitoring. They would be responsible for answering all 9-1-1 calls and all after hour and weekend non-emergency calls. Business hour non-emergency calls will be answered by a new position, which is discussed later in the proposal.

They currently use a different computer aided dispatch (CAD) software called Enterpol. I spoke with representatives from Enterpol. Their computer aided dispatch software is capable of handling more than one department. Our current data stored in our dispatch software can be transferred between systems. Our GIS data can be obtained through our City Planner and mapped on the software. We will also be able to have one Enterpol data terminal in our station at no cost. Chief Dodge and I have

discussed keeping one of our dispatch terminals as an emergency operations center. It will be used in case of an emergency at the Sunset Hills Police Department.

We will also add mobile computer aided dispatch to our police car laptops. One of our concerns with combining our dispatch centers was doubling the workload for the Sunset Hills Dispatchers. Mobile computer aided dispatch will help reduce some of the workload. Adding mobile computer aided dispatch will allow officers to add notes after a call for service. It will allow them to log when they are in route, on-scene, and in service from a call. It will allow them to log directed patrols and business checks. And it will allow them to easily access information about their call for service. Having experience with mobile computer aided dispatch, I know it reduces workload on dispatchers.

The 9-1-1 phone lines would be transferred at no cost through the St. Louis County Emergency Communications Commission (ECC). It takes approximately 30 days to complete this process.

Communications would need to be established between our two agencies. Regional Justice Information Services (REJIS) is responsible for making that connection. The Wide Area Network (WAN)/Local Area Network (LAN) team has quoted us four hours of labor to complete the connection. They charge \$90.00 per hour, with a total quote of \$360.00. This is an estimate and we would be billed for the actual number of hours worked.

We are currently waiting on quotes from Enterpol and REJIS. Our total cost to consolidate is unknown, but from speaking with other agencies who have consolidated I believe a safe estimate for total cost to be no more than \$20,000. This consolidation cost would be a one-time cost. We hope to have these costs covered through a grant. This is discussed later in the proposal.

Below is the dispatching pro forma completed by City Administrator Kris Simpson. Mr. Simpson forecasted our current system cost and our consolidated cost through 2030. The savings range between \$120,000 and \$130,000 per year if we consolidate with Sunset Hills.

Current - Self-provide

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
5 Dispatchers (sal+ben)	\$ 293,387	\$ 300,722	\$ 308,240	\$ 315,946	\$ 323,844	\$ 331,940	\$ 340,239	\$ 348,745	\$ 357,464	\$ 366,400
REJIS Software	\$ 23,310	\$ 23,310	\$ 23,310	\$ 23,310	\$ 23,310	\$ 23,310	\$ 23,310	\$ 23,310	\$ 23,310	\$ 23,310
TOTAL	\$ 316,697	\$ 324,032	\$ 331,550	\$ 339,256	\$ 347,154	\$ 355,250	\$ 363,549	\$ 372,055	\$ 380,774	\$ 389,710

Proposed - Sunset Hills

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
Retain 1 Employee	\$ 61,515	\$ 63,360	\$ 65,261	\$ 67,219	\$ 69,236	\$ 71,313	\$ 73,452	\$ 75,656	\$ 77,925	\$ 80,263
S.H. Dispatch Contract	\$ 67,500	\$ 139,050	\$ 143,222	\$ 147,518	\$ 151,944	\$ 156,502	\$ 161,197	\$ 166,033	\$ 171,014	\$ 176,144
Severance (2 mos x 4)	\$ 39,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Changeover Costs	\$ 20,360	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
S.H. Upgrade Costs	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500
TOTAL	\$ 188,375	\$ 202,910	\$ 208,983	\$ 215,237	\$ 221,679	\$ 228,315	\$ 235,149	\$ 242,189	\$ 249,439	\$ 256,908
Savings	\$ (128,322)	\$ (121,121)	\$ (122,567)	\$ (124,018)	\$ (125,475)	\$ (126,936)	\$ (128,400)	\$ (129,866)	\$ (131,334)	\$ (132,803)

Missouri 911 Consolidation Grants

The Missouri 911 Service Board represents all Missouri 911 entities and jurisdictions. The Service Board was established in statute by the Missouri General Assembly to assist and advise the state in ensuring the availability, implantation and enhancement of a statewide emergency telephone number.



The Missouri 911 Service Board offers grants for consolidation. The grant is for upgrading equipment and covering the costs involved in consolidation. In 2020, the Service Board awarded over \$1,000,000 in grant funds between 13 agencies.

The grant application can either be for an individual agency or a joint agency. If we were to combine with Sunset Hills we could complete a joint application. The grant could cover most, if not all, of the costs associated with the consolidation. Equipment upgrades at Sunset Hills could also be included which would benefit both departments and both communities.

We cannot apply for the grant until we decide to consolidate. I did speak with the Executive Director, Brian Maydwell. When I described what the Crestwood Police Department was proposing he indicated that is what they are looking for in grant requests. I am fairly confident that we would qualify for grant funding.

Downsizing Staff

Unfortunately contracting dispatch services would require us to downsize our staff by four employees. The downsizing would come from four current dispatchers. If approved the consolidation would take between 30 to 60 days. During that period we will be responsible for maintaining our current dispatch system. Because of the need to maintain dispatch operations, and in the interest of treating these employees well, the City Administrator and I discussed the feasibility of severance for the four affected dispatchers. The City Administrator discussed this with Jim Hetlage from Lashly and Baer, and is prepared to discuss options with the Board.

Prior to Board approval, I will notify the dispatchers of our consolidation and severance, if any is approved.

New Position Titled Community Liaison/Analyst

Having our own dispatch serves two purposes. The first purpose is providing dispatch services for the Crestwood Police Department. The second purpose is to be the first point of contact for anyone coming to the police department. Contracting dispatching services from an outside agency provides the first service, but leaves a void in our community contact. Therefore, if we contract services we must create a new position within the police department to fill this void. I have titled the position Community Liaison/Analyst and the position will be filled by a current dispatcher.

The Community Liaison will occupy the current dispatch space. Their primary role will be contacting any walk-ins to the station and answering non-emergency calls for the City of Crestwood during city hall business hours. Crestwood received roughly 16,000 non-emergency calls during 2020. While some of those will be handled by Sunset Hills via the new dispatching agreement, we expect many calls will be

transferred to the Crestwood Police Department, and someone will need to answer and respond to those calls. If just one-third of non-emergency calls (5,300) are forwarded to the Crestwood Police Department by Sunset Hills dispatch, that amounts to an average of 40 phone calls per business day.

The job description will grow over time, but besides being a point of contact for the community, the position will assist with administrative duties throughout the police department. This includes completing monthly statistics and reports, preparing grant applications, making purchases for the Department conducting crime trend analysis, and assisting our Accreditation Manager, Sgt. David Gray. They will also be able to assist our Records Administrative Assistant. Our Records Administrative Assistant will be cross trained to fill in if Community Liaison/Analyst is on leave. For a successful transition into contracted dispatching services, this position is a must.

Recommendation



The staff at the Crestwood Police Department recommends we contract our dispatching services through the Sunset Hills Police Department. Contracting with Sunset Hills is an opportunity to better serve the City of Crestwood. It is an opportunity to expand our already successful relationship with our closest neighbor. It is an opportunity to increase our officer's safety by adding more Police Officers on a radio channel. It is an opportunity to better respond to critical incidents. It is an opportunity to collaborate on issues that are affecting the safety and security of both Crestwood and Sunset Hills. And it is an opportunity to redirect funds to areas that need attention within the police department.

We chose Sunset Hills over East Central Dispatch Center and St. Louis County for the following reasons: I have previous experience with East Central Dispatch Center. They provide a professional level of service but I have two concerns. First is their cost. They cost significantly more than the other proposals and their cost increases at a faster rate. My second concern is their dispatch times. From my experience at Webster Groves, we were constantly having to address the amount of time it took to dispatch a call. Consistently, it would take a dispatcher over three minutes to dispatch a call. Our yearly goal is to have an officer on scene three minutes after a call is received. I would be concerned that our officer arrival times would double if we contracted services with ECDC. I do not believe we could offer the same level of service that we currently give our community.

St. Louis County's cost is phenomenal. Dispatching services under \$75,000 is very appealing. There are also two concerns with St. Louis County. First, they currently cannot offer service. They believe their computer aided dispatch software will be updated within 18 months, but that is still not guaranteed. REJIS is in charge of the upgrades and they are still negotiating with Motorola. I would not be surprised if the upgrades take much longer than 18 months. The bigger concern is their inability to remote monitor our security cameras. We need to ensure after hours and weekends our security cameras are monitored. Officers are not always at our station and it is essential for site security to have the cameras monitored. Also without remote monitoring no one would be able to watch prisoners in our jail. We cannot allow that to happen, therefore this reason alone should disqualify St. Louis County.

The City of Crestwood will be better served contracting our dispatching services through Sunset Hills Police Department. Nearly \$130,000 can be redirected within the Police Department budget, officer's morale will increase, and the community will have more officers at their disposal with two departments on one channel.

Thank you for your time and consideration.