

March 22, 2022

T HE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LEWISTON, IDAHO, and the NEZ PERCE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF LEWISTON, IDAHO, met in a Special Meeting in the back conference room at Lewiston City Hall. Mayor Johnson called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Johnson; Council President Liedkie (via phone); Councilor Blount; Councilor Forsmann; Councilor Kleeburg; Councilor Schroeder; Councilor Tousley.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Commission Chair Zenner; Commissioner Havens; Commissioner Beck

I. CALL TO ORDER

Commission Chair Zenner and Mayor Johnson called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

II. UNIFIED EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS PLANNING

Commission Chair Zenner introduced Mission Critical Partners (MCP) who are working on the Nez Perce County Consolidation Implementation Plan.

Stacey Banker, Mission Critical Project Manager, reported that she is leading the implementation plan. She introduced Steve Haberman, Technology and Facilities SME, and Gigi Smith, Operations and Workforce SME.

Ms. Banker explained that the purpose of their visit is to collaborate, discuss and decide on numerous items that will shape a Consolidation Plan and improve 911 services in Nez Perce County. It is imperative that the opinions of all those involved be taken into consideration, as well as to understand the history about where both the City and County have been with regard to 911 operations and what can be leveraged that is in place today.

The project understanding is that Nez Perce County, the City of Lewiston and the Joint Powers Board seek to improve 911 services within the County. Based on the direction established by the Board, MCP will support the development of a Consolidation Implementation Plan for its two public safety answering points: one maintained at the Nez Perce County Sheriff's Office and one at the Lewiston Police Department.

Councilor Kleeburg reported that staff, council and the commissioners discussed a consolidated center about two years ago, but ran into issues when it came to who would run it. She asked if Mission Critical would be implementing that effort. Ms. Banker confirmed, noting that when her company has completed their project, there will be a roadmap to consolidation which will bring all groups together and improve efficiencies.

Ms. Banker provided an overview of the project schedule, as follows:

Phase 1 – Project Initiation: Updated project schedule; coordination of biweekly project status calls: 02/24/2022

Phase 2: Discovery to Benchmark Current Conditions: Pre-site visit virtual tours; data gathering review call; execution of onsite data discovery schedule; decision point workshops – 04/30/2022

Phase 3: Draft Implementation Plan: Client preliminary recommendations briefing via video conferencing platform; review of draft plan outline via video conferencing platform; review of draft plan via video conferencing platform: 05/31/22

Phase 4: Final Implementation Plan and Presentation: Consolidated Implementation Plan which will include implementation project plan in Gantt chart format with project constraints and estimated task durations, editable overview PowerPoint for use in education session and employee integration crosswalk template in editable format: 06/30/22

Continuing, Ms. Banker indicated the idea with this Plan is to determine how each call center currently works in their respective environments and to determine a plan to consolidate and work together. Responding to a question raised by Councilor Tousley, Ms. Banker explained the end result would be one consolidated cohesive center. She noted the importance of having one board comprised of individuals from Nez Perce County, LPD, LFD, Sheriff's office and elected officials to oversee this center in an effort to provide equitable and fair representation for all those involved, as well as stability.

Upon a comment offered by Councilor Kleeburg regarding the parochial battle between the two agencies in the past over who would manage the joint center, Ms. Banker replied that she has been dealing with this issue throughout her 34-year career. The single biggest reason initiatives fail is due to the political and personal components. However, the end result is an improvement in emergency response and how those utilizing 911 will be served. It's extremely important to put the plan together, identify who would champion it, determine how it will be sold, and ensure there is continued buy-in. The cost of technology continues to increase and the current duplicated systems and resources is not feasible.

Ms. Banker said there are models across the State where this is done efficiently every single day. There will be a great deal of discussion in the coming weeks in order to make decisions for preparation of the Plan. Working groups will be needed, time lines will need to be established, governance and organization structure will have to be determined, and the cost sharing components will need to be figured out.

Councilor Liedkie asked if a location has yet been determined. Ms. Banker replied that a facilities discussion will take place on Thursday wherein staff and her firm will be looking at a couple of viable facilities. She noted that the Port of Lewiston might possibly have some available land. As they were interested in a data center, discussion should be held as to whether they could be in the same facility as the joint dispatch center. Councilor Kleeburg expressed concern that the city's main data center is located in the basement of the Police Department, which lies within a flood plain.

Councilor Blount asked for comments from Police, Fire and the Sheriff's Department regarding a joint dispatch center.

Police Chief Hurd reported that staff began these same conversations about three years ago, and there seemed to be a tug-of-war going on. He said he believes there is now a good road map being developed to move forward and everyone seems to be open minded. This is an opportunity to work together, to share resources, and to not fight for that very small pool of people who are willing to work as dispatchers.

Sheriff Scrimsher stated that this is a good time to be looking at a consolidated dispatch center. He said that he is down several dispatchers and has had to move his staff to 12-hour emergency shifts. Now dispatching for the Nez Perce Tribe as well, the burn out rate for the dispatchers is extremely high. Mr. Scrimsher expressed his appreciation to LPD dispatchers who have been signing up to work in the NPC dispatch center on their days off.

Fire Chief Myklebust reported that he doesn't manage a dispatch center, but the Fire Department does use it over 7,600 times per year to provide EMS services. For his department, it's the process of sustainability and how improvements can be made to get the crews out the door and down the road. He said he believes a joint dispatch center will make a difference in saving lives in Police, Fire and all aspects of public safety.

III. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Lewiston City Council and Nez Perce County Commissioners, the March 22, 2022, Special Meeting adjourned at 6:00 p.m.