

PSAP FUNDING SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

February 23, 2005
12:00PM

Virginia Information Technologies Agency
4th Floor Auditorium
Richmond Plaza Building
110th South 7th Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219

Members Present: Robert Woltz
Linda Cage
Pat Shumate
Bill Agee
Melissa McDaniel

Members absent: Gary Critzer and Sherri Bush

Staff Present: Steve Marzolf, Coordinator
Dorothy Spears-Dean, Analyst
Sam Keys, Analyst
Terry Mayo, Administrative Assistant

CALL TO ORDER

Robert Woltz called the meeting of the PSAP Funding Subcommittee to order at 12:09PM.

PSAP FUNDING HISTORY

Mr. Marzolf presented the committee with a brief history of the PSAP Funding Committee. The basis of the funding began in 1999 with the Board. The basic cost of premise was that cost was split three ways: 1) 100% funding to support Wireless call (call calling system, TIU cards, and trunks; 2) Shared Category where a percentage was taking the total number of wireless call divided by the number of calls by piece of equipment, and 3) Personnel Cost where a percentage of wireless to total calls (see attached hand-out).

Training costs were added in January 2001 as a result of Lynchburg questions and voice logging was added in February 2001 as a result of questions from Danville. In July 2001 the Board added mapping, and in August 2001 the Board added Project Management.

Mr. Marzolf informed the Committee that the meeting packet contained copies of the minutes of the two previous PSAP funding committee meetings (see attachment). Mr. Marzolf reminded the attendees that the 2nd of these meetings was the February 2004 meeting of this committee. At that meeting the Committee recommended the inclusion of the following funding changes that were approved by the Board:

- Make busy circuits
- CAD-based mapping maintenance
- Voice logging recorder maintenance (and purchase using a new formula)

During that meeting, the following issues were also discussed but were not recommended for consideration by the full Board:

- Instant recall recorder maintenance
- EMD program costs
- VSP transfer lines

Finally, at that meeting, the issue of whether mapping should be funded at shared formula #2 instead of #1 was considered. The issue was tabled pending more comprehensive input to be received from another PSAP. That input had not been received so nothing more had been done.

PSAP FUNDING ISSUES

Mr. Marzolf gave the committee an update of the funding (see attached). The fund balance indicated has been committed to resolve the LMU issue that the Board voted on at their last meeting. Mr. Marzolf then laid out in broad terms the funding that is received and distributed. The message was that nearly all of the collected revenue were committed to annual recurring costs leaving little surplus funding to be allocated to new costs.

PUBLIC AND SUBCOMMITTEE DISCUSSION:

Mr. Marzolf stated that the format of this meeting would be to obtain input from members of the committee, as well as from those present in the audience on the funding issues and then discuss at the next meeting scheduled for Thursday, March 3, 2005 at 1:00 PM. After the discussion on Thursday, March 3, 2005, the committee will present its finding to the full E-911 Wireless Service Board at its next scheduled meeting.

Committee Charter:

Issues raised by Franklin County (See attachment).

- Mapping maintenance/upgrade funding
- Ongoing PSAP Assistance for those localities who cannot continue to pay.

The Board expanded the charter of this committee to look more broadly at PSAP funding/assistance.

Funding Strategies:

Mr. Marzolf informed the committee that the next step is to develop funding strategy alternatives.

PSAP Consolidations

Robert Woltz asked if providing additional funding to all PSAPs simply masked or compensated for a bigger problem. The issue was whether some PSAPs were too small to be economically feasible. He asked if providing more funding to these PSAPs made the situation worse. His suggestion was that looking at the possible regional consolidation of PSAPs may be a better long term solution. He recommended to the committee that the Board might consider funding a study for the feasibility of regionalized PSAPs. Mr. Marzolf informed the committee that he does not know if the Board has the authority to undertake such an initiative, but will research it for the next meeting. After significant discussion, Mr. Woltz modified his recommendation to having the Board indicate a willingness to fund regionalize studies for small PSAPs. Mr. Agee asked that funding to regional PSAPs be analyzed to determine a way to encourage regionalization rather than reducing the overall funding available.

Centralize procurement

Mr. Marzolf suggested, based on input from the Board Chairman at the last Board meeting, that the centralizing procurement of E-911 equipment and services may provide cost savings to the Board. This did not involve the requiring PSAPs to purchase off of statewide contracts, but rather to offer such contracts to leverage the purchasing power of the Commonwealth as a whole. In order to get the best pricing, surveys will be needed to determine the number of PSAPs that would take advantage of these contracts.

Assistance to localities

Mr. Marzolf informed the committee that there has been some momentum since the last board meeting concerning assistance to localities, i.e., program project management. At the meeting, three options were discussed for providing this assistance:

1. Use the existing project management program
2. Allow PSAPs to obtain their own assistance and reimburse at 100%
3. Expand the Public Safety Communications Division (regional offices)

The option receiving the most support was the third option. Mr. Woltz questioned whether this should be part of a regionalization study since it too would compensate for the small PSAP.

Appropriate Funding Formula

The original question regarding the appropriate funding formula for mapping maintenance and replacement was discussed. The concern, which was also

expressed at the full Board meeting, is that PSAPs will not have the local resources to fund their share of the continued care and feeding of the mapping and call counting system resulting in a degradation to the system over time.

Automatic Pass-through Funding

Mr. Marzolf presented a new concept for PSAP funding that would provide automatic funding to PSAPs based on some sort of formula. In this scenario, a portion of the wireless surcharge would be earmarked for PSAPs. This amount would be divided among the PSAPs based on some sort of formula that would ensure that they receive a similar level of funding as they do today. There would no longer be a need for forms with complicated formulas to be submitted to the Board. However, this proposal would not solve the bigger problem expressed regarding small PSAPs. This approach would probably not provide enough local funding to small PSAPs to ensure that they could maintain and upgrade mapping and other systems.

Personnel Minimums

Mr. Agee questioned whether the \$30,000 minimum funding is still appropriate. He believed that \$30,000 is inadequate to hire a dispatcher as well as have sufficient support staff. Additionally, he questioned the “all or nothing” approach to funding of the PSAP manager or director. The current guidelines, modeled after the wireline legislation, require that the director have no other responsibilities other than the PSAP. If they do, the PSAP is ineligible for funding for any of their salary.

GIS Personnel/Support

In addition to the personnel funding minimums, Mr. Agee suggested that in addition to the basic funding that more funding needs to be made available for GIS personnel/support. Currently, GIS personnel is only funded at the wireless percentage for locality GIS personnel “assigned” to the PSAP. Several localities utilize contractors, but funding is not currently available for contractors.

Requested Analysis:

The PSAP Funding Subcommittee came up with the following items to be discussed at the March 3, 2005 meeting:

- Make recommendations and determine the cost/feasibility of a PSAP consolidation/ regionalization study.
- Develop the concept of centralized procurement to provide greater detail and projected cost savings.
- Determine the cost of additional PSAP assistance for each of the options.
- Determine the cost of each funding formula for call counting and mapping maintenance.
- Develop a list of pros and cons for the automatic pass-through funding method of PSAP funding.
- Analyze current personnel costs to determine if a change of the minimum funding amount is appropriate and what the impact is to the fund.

- Determine a potential impact of changes to the GIS personnel/support costs formula.

ADJOURNMENT

With no other business to be discussed, Mr. Marzolf thanked everybody for coming to this committee meeting, and said that he would be sending out location notices about the March 3, 2005 meeting. Mr. Robert Woltz adjourned the meeting at 2:38PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Terry D. Mayo
Administrative Assistant
Public Safety Communications

Approved by subcommittee: _____
(date)