

Public Safety Subcommittee Report: Police/Public Assistance/Fire - 12/12/07

Subcommittee members met with the Zionsville Town Marshall and the Boone County Sheriff Department to address coverage of the "rural" areas of the new consolidated territory and first response to 911 calls in the rural district.

BCSD stated that any changes to the territorial coverage of the BCSD required adequate lead time so that the department could manually update their data base to reflect those changes. A lead time of at least 60 days is requested before changes are implemented. Since changes to the consolidated boundaries would only be changed every 2 years, this was adequate for the BCSD to prepare for any future changes.

Both ZPD and BCSD have a very collaborative working relationship and will coordinate between the departments who will respond to 911 calls. 911 calls are triaged by BCSD at the time of the call to determine if the call is truly life threatening or not, and will dispatch accordingly. If the call is life threatening, the call is broadcasted such that both ZPD and BCSD officers in the field receive the call. The officers are able to coordinate who is closest and available to the source of need and that officer will respond first.

Both the BCSD and ZPD strongly emphasized that the consolidation should not result in more than two ordinances, one for the town and one for the rural area. Further, they stated that BCSD could not enforce town ordinances and ZPD could not enforce county ordinances. Accordingly, we recommend that the rural area continue with county ordinances and that the town area continue with town ordinances, and that no new set of in-between ordinances be introduced.

While in an ideal world it would be advantageous to reallocate certain county tax dollars now assigned to Boone County to cover the incremental police coverage by ZPD in the new consolidated territory, it is not an option now and may not be in the future. In addition, the reallocating of those funds could lead to conflicts and a break down in collaboration between the BCSD and ZPD which would not be worth the risk.

Whether there needs to be an inter local agreement or Memorandum of Understanding between the Town of Zionsville and BCSD on a cooperative policing arrangement is left for the governing bodies to determine. It is not in place now and is not felt it is needed; however, future leaders of the local governments and BCSD may differ on what is acceptable and not acceptable coverage responsibilities and the subcommittee felt either the interlocal agreement or MOU would provide longer term stability to this issue.