

The Franklin City Commission convened with Simpson Fiscal Court in **special called joint session** at 9:00 am on Wednesday, July 6, 2011, in the second floor meeting room of the Simpson County Court House, public square, Franklin, Kentucky. Elected Officials present were:

City of Franklin Commission

Honorable Mayor Ronnie Clark, chair
Commissioner Mason Barnes
Commissioner Larry Dixon
Commissioner Jamie Powell
Commissioner Henry Stone

Simpson Fiscal Court

Honorable Judge-Ex. Jim Henderson, chair
Magistrate Larry Randolph
Magistrate Kelly Banton
Magistrate Marty Chandler
Magistrate Blake Tarpley

Also present were City Manager, Kenton Powell; City Attorney, Scott Crabtree; Police Chief, Todd Holder; City Clerk, Kathy Stradtner; County Attorney, Sam Phillips; Fiscal Court Clerk, Pam Rohrs; Franklin-Simpson Fire Chief, Mark Holcomb; Simpson County Jailer, Eric Vaughn; Simpson County Sheriff, Chris Cline; F-S Ambulance Service Director, Peggy Cox; members of the Simpson County Dispatch Center staff; members of the Simpson County Sheriff's office staff; Kentucky State Police (KSP) representatives, and several other attendees. F-S High employee Adam Wilshire was present to video tape the meeting. Members of the media present were James Mooneyhan and Keith Pyles representing the Franklin Favorite/WFKN.

At 9:01 am Judge-Executive Henderson called the Fiscal Court into session and Mayor Clark called the City Commission into special called joint session. City Commissioner Larry Dixon offered an opening prayer and Judge-Executive Henderson led the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

CALLED MEETING AGENDA ITEMS

911 DISPATCH ADVISORY BOARD REPORT

Judge-Executive Henderson gave a brief history of 911 services in Simpson County; funds to support the service come from a surcharge levied on land phone lines, a smaller fee levied on cell phones, and contributions by the local governments. Prior to 2002, the service had been located in the Franklin Police station and furnished by City dispatchers with the County contributing a small amount to help offset the cost. In 2002 the City was spending a tremendous amount of money to administer and maintain the service as desired, and the County made the choice to oversee the entire operation by creating a Simpson County Dispatch Center. At that time, the County increased the phone levies to include a \$2.00 per land line fee with the County making up any difference in cost. The City, who has an interlocal agreement with the County, contributes an amount toward the cost and the agreement is due to expire January 3, 2013. Other emergency services that use the dispatch service also pay a small amount. The arrangement has worked very well, but at this time, the County needs additional funds to continue operating a quality 911 center and upgrade existing equipment, so the 911 Advisory Board was charged with looking in to the options. The Board consists of the following voting members: Mayor, Judge-Executive, Police Chief, Sheriff, Fire Chief, Director of 911 Center, and EMS Service Representative. At this time, 911 Board chairman and F-S Fire Rescue Chief Mark Holcomb addressed the meeting.

- **Discussion and/or Action Regarding Recommendation from 911 Board**

Chief Mark Holcomb serves as chairman of the Simpson County 911 Board and in April, 2011 the board was charged with reviewing the current funding and procedures of the 911 system, and investigating and making recommendations to the Fiscal Court on future operation of the system. Current annual operating cost of the Simpson County 911 Dispatch Center is approximately \$500,000, and as more and more of the general public turn to cell phone use and disconnect land line phone, the revenue stream from the phone levies is declining while operating costs continue to rise. Following further explanation of the extensive process the 911 Board went through in studying this problem; Chief Holcomb reported that on June 8, 2011 the Board and those present voted to recommend that Simpson County Fiscal Court and the City move forward with a proposal from KSP to operate the Franklin-Simpson 911 Dispatch.

- **Presentation of Kentucky State Police Dispatching Proposal by Post 3 Captain Lisa Rudsinski**

KSP Post 3 Commander, Captain Lisa Rudsinski, addressed the assembly. KSP was contacted by the 911 Board and ask to explain and possibly give a proposal for operating the Franklin Simpson Dispatch and 911 systems. Operating such systems is not new to KSP. Posts through out Kentucky have operated such installments successfully for many years and Post 3 has just begun administering 911 dispatches for Hart County. KSP is offering an initial two year agreement for \$275,000 per fiscal year; the twenty-four hour, seven day a week service can be tailored to fight our City and County; the initial agreement would be for a two year time period with costs reviewed annually. The 911 phone line fees would be forwarded to KSP, and the County billed on a quarterly basis the difference remaining. Plans are to hire five additional telecommunication officials for Simpson County should the agreement be accepted. The only other cost would be a start-up cost KSP requires and passes on for installing the service from local installations to the KSP post so that calls will ring directly into the KSP center. Captain Rudsinski also shared that if Simpson County chooses to go with KSP dispatch, much of the start up cost may be able to be interfaced with a grant they received for upgrades to their dispatch center and thereby reduce the net amount due from Simpson County for those costs. KSP anticipates that if all goes well and the Franklin-Simpson agreement is adopted, KSP could be operating the dispatch by January, 2012. After the initial two year agreement, KSP will review the operations for Simpson County and adjust the agreement cost appropriately. The KSP Captain entertained questions from the officials concerning operation of the center and there followed a lengthy session.

At 10:05 am the open meeting was recessed; meeting was reconvened at 10:15 am.

- **Comments/Questions from Public**

Mayor Clark chaired the question and answer session for the public; those wishing to speak had signed a roster upon entering the meeting indicating their desire to address the assembly and speakers were requested to limit comments to four minutes each.

- Beth Williams and Tracie Spears, Simpson County Sheriff's office staff, expressed their concern and opposition to having the dispatch moved out of Simpson County; they stated no officials had taken the time to hear their thoughts and feel their office will be directly impacted with a number of citizen complaints and calls with reluctance to call KSP; concerned that criminal histories that are obtained through dispatch cannot be sent by fax and must be picked up in person, resulting in a drive to Bowling Green KSP

- KSP personnel responded the phone will ring directly to them, without the need to be rerouted and callers should experience no difference in calling local or calling KSP dispatch, the number will remain local; KSP dispatch assured they were able to fax criminal histories directly to the sheriff's dedicated fax or could mail to a specific person at the sheriff's office.
- Wendy Henson, Simpson County 911 Dispatch employee opposes moving the center to KSP; as a dedicated employee with experience and training, she would like to be given the opportunity to share with Simpson County by serving their dispatch center.
 - KSP Captain Rudsinski shared that although she is not at liberty to guarantee anyone a job, she can guarantee that at least five (5) additional dispatchers will be needed at their center, and encourages any displaced Simpson county employees, if their agreement is adopted, apply to KSP and they will be promised an interview, and with all things equal, will most likely be hired at KSP. KSP Dispatch center employee, Christy Bashan, also assured those interested of the excellent benefits and wages that KSP employees enjoy.
- Simpson County Sheriff Chris Cline stated dispatch was under the auspices of the Sheriff's Office and he realized the need to upgrade the existing equipment, but was concerned Simpson County citizens will not receive the quality of service they are used to if the dispatch center is moved out of Simpson County.
 - Captain Rudsinski, and Ms. Bashan reiterated that after all lines are installed appropriately, callers will not realize any difference when placing a call; the call will be instantly forwarded to KSP and with the equipment available to them, the location of cell phone callers will be pinpointed so that dispatch will be able to view their location and surroundings.
- Police Chief Todd Holder stated seventy percent (70%) of Dispatch center calls go to the Police Department and he has attended all the meetings of the 911 Board; he has talked with the Simpson County dispatch employees and has gotten some positive feedback; with any change or new installation there are always kinks or adjustments to be made, but from everything he has read and researched everyone will end up going to this type of regional dispatching, Simpson county's question only appears to be whether they will do so now when they will be one of the first in line at Post 3, or later when they will be in the back of the pack; Chief Holder has talked to others who use KSP for dispatch, and has a good feeling that this is the best plan for our community
- F-S Fire Rescue Chief Mark Holcomb stated that although his department is the smallest user of the Simpson County Dispatch Center, that after his review he knows that today calls are routed through Madisonville, KY before reaching the Franklin center, and if this agreement is adopted, will be routed directly to the KSP Bowling Green office with no delay; Chief Holcomb supports and encourages adoption of the KSP agreement at the earliest date.
- EMS Director Peggy Cox stated she supports going to the KSP agreement; she contacted approximately twelve counties and got positive replies from each with good experience in changing over and excellent response time.

• **Comments/Questions from Fiscal Court & City Commission**

Judge Henderson had spoke with several other officials whose County has such agreements with KSP and each one reported a positive experience; after the initial cost, most have experienced only a cost of living increase. The Judge had spoke with many of the Simpson County Dispatchers, and of the eight current full-time employees, one has accepted a position with KSP, one has indicated a desire to return to college and being unemployed would actually be to their advantage, leaving six employees that could apply for the five positions at KSP should the Simpson County agreement be adopted. In addition, KSP still needs

additional qualified positions for their service of the Hart County dispatch. From Simpson County citizens, Judge Henderson has received one call in favor of using KSP for Simpson County 911 dispatch and two negative phone calls.

City Commissioner Mason Barnes had a question regarding the funding should the KSP agreement be adopted; his understanding is the 911 phone line revenue will go to KSP, and the remainder be billed to the County; since this appears to be strictly a fiscal question regarding the cost, he was concerned of the impact a change might have on the City. No increase is anticipated for the City.

County Magistrate Chandler stated that after his consideration of the agreement, he supports going with the proposal from KSP. Several of the Magistrates echoed that sentiment.

A mandate from the Federal Communications Commission is expected that will require all 911 centers to accept text calls to their centers thereby requiring a further upgrade and modification of equipment. Since KSP will have to updated their equipment anyway for the state police service, they assured they will not be passing on such costs to their dispatch customers.

• **Comments from Members of 911 Dispatch Advisory Board**

No additional comments.

• **Discussion and/or Action Regarding Termination of Current City/County Inter-Local Agreement for 911 Dispatching Services**

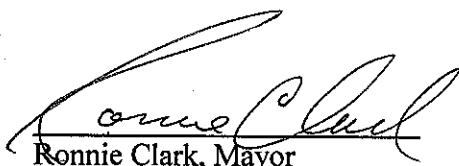
After further discussion and consideration, **motion** and second was made by the Fiscal Court to notify the City of Franklin of their intent to terminate the Interlocal Agreement regarding 911 Dispatch service no later than December 31, 2012. Motion carried unanimously.


Motion was made by Commissioner Powell and seconded by Commissioner Stone to accept the notice of termination of the 911 Dispatch interlocal agreement from Simpson County so long as the County continues to operate dispatch under the terms and conditions of the interlocal agreement until operations of dispatch are assumed by the Kentucky State Police, and authorize the Mayor to sign any documents necessary per this motion, including the termination agreement. Ayes: All. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion and second was made by the Fiscal Court to proceed with the proposal as submitted by Kentucky State Police for consolidated 911 dispatch service. Motion carried unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

At 11:05am **motion** was made and seconded by members of the Fiscal Court and **motion** was made by Commissioner Barnes and seconded by Commissioner Dixon to adjourn the joint meeting. Ayes: All. Motion carried unanimously and the Joint Session was closed.


Ronnie Clark, Mayor
City of Franklin, KY


Kathy Stradtner, City Clerk
City of Franklin, KY