

Lake County Board of County Commissioners
c/o Mr. Kirby Smith, Chairman
315 West Main Street
Tavares, FL 32778

Peyton C. Grinnell, Sheriff
Lake County Sheriff's Office
Attn: General Counsel
360 West Ruby Street
Tavares, FL 32778

Re: 911 Dispatch Services

Dear County Commissioners and Sheriff Grinnell:

In accordance with Chapter 125.01(6), *Florida Statutes*, please find the enclosed resolutions adopted by the Town of Astatula, City of Fruitland Park, Town of Howey-In-The-Hills, City of Mascotte, and the City of Umatilla (collectively the "Municipalities"). Each resolution was adopted in response to the Municipalities receiving the Sheriff's proposed Agreement for Law Enforcement Dispatch Services (the "Agreement"), as each Municipality currently receives emergency dispatch services from the Lake County Emergency Center (the "Center").

All six Municipalities prefer to keep the County's high quality, centralized dispatch system in place. We have a duty to our citizens, however, to ensure they are not being treated unfairly for the services they pay for.

The correspondence received suggests that each of the Municipalities must do one of two things: (1) approve the Agreement to pay a fee of \$12 per resident for 911 services; or (2) launch its own dispatch system with additional staffing required.

It is our understanding that the Center and its staff are funded through a combination of countywide ad valorem tax revenues, the county's share of the statewide E911 fee, and other intergovernmental grants. We understand that our residents should and will pay a fair share of the cost of the service through the **county** ad valorem taxes and fees they pay. If those need to be raised, we would understand a proposed **county** millage increase. However, what is not understood is why municipal residents should suffer increased **municipal** ad valorem taxes and/or increased **municipal** expenditures to fund a municipal contract obligation when the Center is operated from county funds that already include the contributions of municipal residents, made on the same basis as contributions of unincorporated residents; municipal residents pay the same 5 mills into the system as unincorporated county residents, and the same E911 fees appear on their phone bills.

In other words, if the Sheriff's agreement becomes mandatory for the Municipalities, county residents will pay once for the dispatch service, but residents of the municipalities will pay twice: The residents and taxpayers of unincorporated Lake County will pay their countywide millage and their E911 fees. The residents and taxpayers of the Municipalities will pay the same countywide millage, plus the same E911 fees, **but also the \$12 per capita fee** under Sheriff Grinnell's agreement.

It is with this information that we request the Board of County Commissioners develop an appropriate mechanism to finance the Center. It is our objective to work together to ensure a mutually beneficial service is funded through a fair, reasonable, and equitable allocation of costs. We appreciate your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Mitchell Mack, Mayor of Astatula

Martha MacFarlane, Mayor of Howey-in-the-Hills

Chris Cheshire, Mayor of Fruitland Park

Steven Sheffield, Mayor of Mascotte

Kent Adcock, Mayor of Umatilla

cc: Jennifer Barker, County Manager
Melanie Marsh, County Attorney

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