



CITY OF LAKE FOREST PARK

CITY COUNCIL

AGENDA COVER SHEET

Meeting Date	September 14, 2023
Originating Department	Police Department
Contact Person	Mike Harden, Police Chief
Title	Resolution 23-1916/ Authorizing the Mayor to sign an Interlocal Agreement with North East King County Regional Public Safety Communication Agency (NORCOM) for dispatching services Resolution 23-1917/ Authorizing the Mayor to sign the Information Technology Additional Services Agreement by and between Lake Forst Park Police Department and NORCOM

Legislative History

- First Presentation August 10, 2023 Regular Meeting
 - Second Presentation September 14, 2023 Regular Meeting
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Attachments:

1. Resolution Number 23-1916
 2. Resolution Number 23-1917
 3. City of Lake Forest Park and NORCOM Principal Services Agreement
 4. Summary of NORCOM ILA 2007 with Amendments
 5. Information Technology Additional Services Agreement by and between Lake Forest Park Police Department and NORCOM
 6. NORCOM ILA 2007 with Amendments
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Executive Summary

As discussed with the City Council last month, the Administration sent a letter to the North East King County Regional Public Safety Communications Agency (NORCOM) requesting that NORCOM supply

public safety dispatching services to the City. For Council's consideration tonight is the proposed agreement between the City and NORCOM that would make the City a principal party to the 2007 NORCOM ILA (Principal Agreement). The Principal Agreement provides that the City become a party to the 2007 Interlocal Agreement (ILA) that created NORCOM and the subsequent amendment to same. A summary of those ILA terms has been provided in addition to the ILA itself.

Also for Council's consideration tonight is the Information Technology Additional Services Agreement between Lake Forest Park and NORCOM for NORCOM to provide the City technical services to implement and maintain a Tyler CAD (computer aided dispatch) to AXON interface to auto-tag CAD calls with body camera video.

Background

In May of 1999, the City of Lake Forest Park entered an agreement with Bothell Dispatch to implement CAD, RMS, AVL, and Mobile Data Systems. Despite having our own dispatch services at that time, Lake Forest Park Police sought a software solution to digitize our police department's processes. In June 2003, Lake Forest Park decided to dissolve its dispatch unit and instead utilize dispatch services provided by the City of Bothell. The integration of the "New World" computer system, now owned by Tyler Systems, was a significant step that brought together Kirkland, Bothell, and Lake Forest Park in a joint endeavor. All of Lake Forest Park's data was hosted in Bothell's servers, and the systems integration allowed seamless access to police reports, records, and dispatched aided calls for officers using mobile and desktop devices.

On June 20, 2023, the City of Bothell discontinued providing dispatch services to Lake Forest Park, effective at the end of October 2023. Bothell is entering into an agreement with NORCOM, a consolidated 911 call-taking and dispatching communications center founded in 2007 by twenty public safety organizations in the northeast region of King County. NORCOM already serves multiple police and fire agencies, and now, they will take on Bothell's responsibilities.

911 Dispatch Background

When a call is made to 911 with an emergency, many things must happen to ensure the right response occurs. Depending on how the call originated, Bothell Dispatch determines where the call is routed to for initial response.

Calls originated in Lake Forest Park from a Land Line: 911 calls from Lake Forest Park landlines are answered by emergency call-takers in the current Bothell Police Dispatch Center. If police response is needed, patrol officers are alerted while Dispatchers continue to gather additional information from the caller. If fire or medical response is needed, Dispatchers will connect the caller with NORCOM 911 to dispatch Fire/EMS services, who will also provide medical directions to the caller if needed. Police dispatchers also stay on the line in case police dispatch is needed.

Calls originated in Lake Forest Park from cell phones: Calls to 911 from cell phones in Lake Forest Park will first be connected with NORCOM 911, at its emergency communications center located in Bellevue, Washington. If the caller needs fire or medical response, NORCOM will alert area Shoreline Fire/EMS while gathering additional information from the caller and also provide medical direction to the caller if needed. If a police response is needed, NORCOM will connect the caller with Bothell Police Dispatch, and a police response will be initiated. NORCOM dispatchers will remain on the line while the call is connected. Per King County, cell phone origination accounts for 80 to 82% of all 911 calls, with NORCOM being the first dispatch response for all cell phone calls in Lake Forest Park.

While the current police communications center in Bothell's police department has provided excellent service to the community, due to several factors, the City of Bothell is getting out of the business of providing police dispatch.

NORCOM is currently the service provider for the dispatching of Fire/EMS in Lake Forest Park and is the first call response for all cell phone originated calls in Lake Forest Park and is the backup for the Police Department when Bothell Dispatch services are down (due to vacancies, vacations, or technology issues) or the system is overwhelmed. NORCOM services will lead to better communication between Fire and Police Dispatch when both are dispatched to the same emergency event and will help avoid confusion about where 911 calls should go. NORCOM is also partnering with and implementing changes with the recently formed Regional Crisis Response Agency (RCR).

NORCOM is a regional dispatch center. In 2022, NORCOM dispatched approximately 300,000 calls for 6 police agencies and 13 Fire/EMS agencies, including Shoreline (Northshore) Fire/EMS. In 2022, calls for Fire/EMS services were dispatched by NORCOM within 60 seconds 85% of the time and within 90 seconds 95% of the time. NORCOM employs 62 telecommunicators and is overseen by a Governing Board of which Shoreline Fire is a Principal member. In addition, the Fire Chief participates in the Fire Board, and if police service is approved, then the Police Chief (or designee) would participate in the Police Board. NORCOM offers efficiencies from the size of operations, including 24/7 /365 technology support as well as, if approved, dispatch services for three of the five RCR cities (Kirkland, Lake Forest Park, and Bothell)

Due to NORCOM's excellent service providing Fire/EMS dispatch services, as well as the efficiency gains from the consolidation of all dispatch services, the agreements with NORCOM will provide for an expansion of NORCOM's services to Lake Forest Park to include police/public safety dispatch services. In doing so, all callers from Lake Forest Park will be handled by one dispatch service.

On August 11th, the NORCOM Governing Board approved the City of Lake Forest Park and the Police Department to join NORCOM.

As for Lake Forest Park, we have limited alternatives for dispatch services. Redmond and Issaquah dispatch agencies are options, but they use a different software system called "Spillman," which would involve high costs for conversion. Additionally, the city could consider returning to self-dispatching, but this approach proves to be financially prohibitive.

NORCOM has been preparing for the potential inclusion of Bothell and Lake Forest Park police departments. They provided an initial Service Cost Estimate for the Lake Forest Park Police Department's dispatch services, projecting an estimated annual cost of \$463,560, not including the expenses related to data conversion and system migration.

Bothell PD is scheduled to transition to NORCOM on November 1, 2023, and Lake Forest Park will adhere to the same timeline. The city has valued the partnership with Bothell over the past 20 years and intends to continue their collaboration through NORCOM for police services by being on the same radio channel at NORCOM.

Overall, choosing NORCOM is considered the most prudent and fiscally responsible solution for Lake Forest Park's dispatch needs. The urgency of the matter requires prompt action and approval to ensure a smooth transition to NORCOM's services.

Fiscal & Policy Implications

The current annual cost for Bothell dispatch services, equipment, and maintenance is \$179,359.60. Out of this total, \$112,016 is allocated for dispatch services, and \$67,343.60 is earmarked for computer equipment and maintenance.

For the period of November 1, 2023, through December 31, 2023, the City would pay NORCOM \$71,665 for providing PSAP (public-safety access point) services. The remaining City budget for dispatch services for the 4th quarter will be applied to NORCOM services for dispatch.

Looking ahead to NORCOM's projected 2024 budget, the estimated annual cost for dispatch services for the Lake Forest Park Police Department will be \$463,560. This represents an increase of \$283,560 compared to the current costs.

Alternatives

One alternative is Lake Forest Park re-establishing our own dispatch services. However, this course of action would require 6.5 dispatchers to ensure 24/7 coverage for a radio channel. This would also entail the acquisition of necessary hardware and additional IT work. Additionally, the issue of housing the dispatch center arises, as city hall is already operating beyond its capacity, leaving us with no space. Regrettably, this option is financially impractical.

King County only dispatches for their incorporated and contract agencies. Snohomish County would be the same, and it would be very unusual to have a King County agency being dispatched by a Snohomish County PSAPS. We don't know the legal issues with PSERN (Puget Sound Emergency Radio Network) in moving all our new equipment from the King County voters to Snohomish County.

The only alternative dispatch systems that we have available (that are semi-local) is Redmond and Issaquah dispatch. These two agencies house their own dispatch services. Redmond dispatches Duvall as a contract city. Issaquah dispatches for Snoqualmie as a contract city. Two big issues arise from using their services. One is cost, and the second is the computer systems. Starting with the systems, both agencies are running "Spillman" software, which is a totally different CAD, RMS, Mobile product. Beyond the increased costs of dispatch services, changing over to Spillman is cost-prohibitive. Training our staff on the New World system took several years, highlighting the significant investment in time and resources. Consequently, the prospect of training the entire staff on a new system appears daunting and comes with substantial costs.

Redmond PD is also not able to provide full services under our time requirements (by Oct 20, 2023). Services could be provided in a long-term plan, but there is an estimated timeline of 1 year to be prepared for necessary technology, staffing requirements, and data conversion. A partial cost has been provided of \$640,000 annually, and that does not include technology or other costs would be substantially higher. Issaquah costs were similar, over \$650,000.

Staff Recommendation

Approve Resolution Number 23-1915, authorizing the Mayor to sign the City of Lake Forest Park and NORCOM Principal Services Agreement, effective November 1st, 2023.

Approve Resolution Number 23-1916, authorizing the Mayor to sign the Information Technology Additional Services Agreement by and between Lake Forest Park Police Department and NORCOM.