

**MINUTES OF THE
DISPATCH SERVICES SUBCOMMITTEE
LAW ENFORCEMENT AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE INTERIM COMMITTEE**
Tuesday, November 29, 2005 – 9:00 a.m. – Room W020 House Building

Members Present:

Rep. Paul Ray, Chair
Sen. Fred J. Fife III
Rep. DeMar "Bud" Bowman
Rep. Curtis Oda

Staff Present:

Mr. Stewart E. Smith, Policy Analyst
Ms. Susan Creager Allred, Associate General Counsel
Ms. Wendy L. Bangerter, Legislative Secretary

Members Absent:

Sen. Mark B. Madsen
Rep. Duane E. Bourdeaux

Note: A list of others present, copy of related materials, and an audio recording of the meeting can be found at www.le.utah.gov.

1. Committee Business

Chair Ray called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

MOTION: Sen. Fife moved to approve the minutes of November 10, 2005. The motion passed unanimously

2. Cost Estimates for Public Safety Retirement for Dispatchers

Mr. Gary Ricks, Office of the Legislative Fiscal Analyst, after consultation with the DPS (Department of Public Safety) and URS (Utah Retirement Systems) said the cost to the state to offer 86 DPS dispatchers a 20-year public safety retirement would currently be approximately \$318,000 annually, subject to future increases as may be charged to the state to ensure the retirement program is fully funded. The cost to local governments for their dispatchers would be between \$2.2 and \$5.0 million annually. He said the increase in cost for the Public Safety Retirement Program for FY 2007 was 12.5 percent, which is included in the \$318,000 mentioned above.

Ms. Kathleen Fisher, Orem City DPS, questioned whether cities had been approached to see if they would want to switch from their DPS retirement benefits to the Public Safety retirement program.

Mr. Wayne Pace, firefighter, Orem, expressed concern for the adverse affect this could have on long-time employees who would have to actuarially adjust their retirement.

Ms. Deborah Mecham, Dispatch Manager, Weber Area Consolidated Communications Center, also expressed concern for the effect the conversion could have on long-time employees. She recommended they be given the option to join or not to join.

Sheriff Bud Cox, Davis County, noted that the costs of training a dispatcher could be off-set by offering a 20-year retirement and reducing the turnover of employees. He expressed appreciation for the Legislature's efforts to meet the dispatchers' needs.

Mr. Dan Fallows, DPS, stated Public Safety Commissioner Flower's support for the concept of a 20-year retirement for dispatchers.

3. State-wide Reimbursement Formula Update

Mr. Rich Amon, Governor's Office of Planning and Budget, distributed "Statewide Reimbursement Formula Update." He reviewed the proposed formula that would be used to compare the five counties that the state contracts dispatch services with.

The Subcommittee discussed the differences in county expenses that would have to be figured into the formula.

Ms. Mecham; Mr. Adrian Ruiz, Manager, Salt Lake Communications Center, Department of Public Safety; and Ms. Kathleen Fisher, Orem City DPS, all spoke in favor of the state-wide reimbursement formula.

Mr. Amon stated there are three areas in which it will be difficult to compare the costs in counties because of disparities in: 1) building leases; 2) equipment; and 3) salaries.

4. Recommendations to the Legislature

MOTION: Sen. Fife moved that legislation be drafted to provide state and local public safety dispatchers a 20-year retirement. The motion passed unanimously.

Rep. Bowman offered to sponsor the bill with Rep. Ray offering to be a cosponsor. Sen. Fife offered to sponsor the bill in the Senate.

MOTION: Rep. Oda moved to recommend to the Executive Appropriations Committee and the Executive Offices and Criminal Justice Appropriations Subcommittee that a state-wide formula be established and funded for state-paid dispatch services. The motion passed unanimously.

MOTION: Rep. Ray moved that the subcommittee recommend to the Legislature that a study be done of the potential cost savings and safety to the public that can be achieved by consolidation of dispatch centers in large geographic areas of the state. The motion passed unanimously.

5. Other Items/ Adjourn

MOTION: Rep. Oda moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Chair Ray adjourned the meeting at 9:55 a.m.