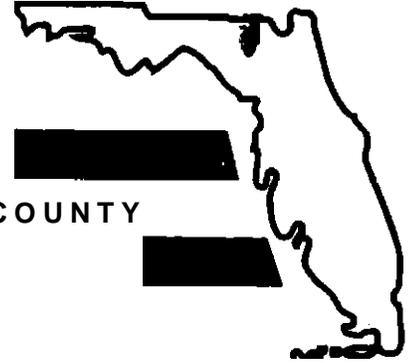


District No. 1 - Ronald Williams  
District No. 2 - Rusty DePratter  
District No. 3-Bucky Nash  
District No. 4-Stephen E. Bailey  
District No. 5 - Scarlet P. Frisina



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS • COLUMBIA COUNTY

February 8, 2013

Mr. Wendell Johnson, City Manager  
City of Lake City  
205 N Marion Avenue  
Lake City, FL 32053

Dear Mr. Johnson;

In recent weeks, we have had several conversations concerning the 911 Combined Communications Center and the backup PSAP. As you are aware, a portion of the backup equipment resides inside the Detention Facility and a portion of the equipment is in a trailer adjacent to the facility. Columbia County is in the process of moving all of the equipment inside the building. Should the need arise; emergency calls can then be handled from the Detention Facility.

To protect the safety of the City and County residents, I am recommending a change to the Mutual Aid and Automatic Aid Interlocal Agreement on page 3 to Section 8: Termination. In a worst case scenario, should we reach a point where either party chooses to terminate this agreement to provide automatic fire aid, we request that the transition period be extended to 180 days or until the appropriate changes can be made to the CAD system, whichever is less. This will protect the citizens from confusion and missed calls while the two CAD systems are changed. This allows the City and the County to manage a smooth transition if it becomes necessary.

Finally, we are trying to resolve all of the concerns raised by the Lake City Fire Department today. I received numerous issues this morning from Chief Armijo and have scheduled a dispute resolution meeting next week with your Chief. We investigate every concern that is raised in an effort to constantly improve our dispatching service. I encourage the City to participate when you have any concerns and not wait. As part of my investigation, I am requesting a copy of all emails from your Fire Chief or Assistant Fire Chief to our 911 Center (Sandy Morgan, Bennie Coleman or Patricia Coker) during the period outlined by Chief Armijo, June 27, 2012 to January 27, 2013. My staff is reviewing all of the records from this time period as well. At the dispute resolution meeting, we will identify and take any needed corrective action.

Public safety is critical to all of our citizens and visitors. Columbia County will continue to strive to improve public safety and the 911 Combined Communications Center.

Sincerely;

David Kraus, Safety Manager

CC: Frank Armijo, Lake City Fire Chief  
Dale Williams, County Manager

David Boozer, Columbia County Fire Chief  
File



# City of Lake City

205 N. MARION AVE.  
LAKE CITY, FLORIDA 32055

TELEPHONE: (386) 752-2031  
FAX: (386) 752-4896

March 19, 2013

David Kraus, Safety Manager  
Columbia County Board of Commissioners  
P. O. Box 1529  
Lake City, FL 32056

Re: Combined Communications Center (CCC) and Public Safety Issues

Dear David:

At the request of the Mayor and City Council, I hereby reply to your letter of February 8, 2013. My response addresses the three issues in the sequence brought forth in your letter which are: 1) Location of the "backup" Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP); 2) Proposed changes to the Mutual Aid and Automatic Aid Interlocal Agreement, and 3) Dispatching concerns of the Lake City Fire Department. Additionally, a perspective regarding the CCC operations in general will be provided.

From the beginning the Columbia County 9-1-1 Combined Communications Center Committee hierarchy which was approved by all members in 2008 for planning and decision making purposes has not been followed and/or utilized. A shift to present day CCC decision making practices originated in early 2010, apparently because the City started asking questions and expressing concerns. Stakeholder collaboration, the governance model and SOPs were among our principal concerns - concerns which simply fell on deaf ears. So, in 2011 when the Center became operational, the City gingerly continued CCC participation with fire dispatch but decided conditions were not suitable to integrate police dispatch as a component of the CCC.

Your letter, our recent conversations and general feedback from a number of other sources leaves the impression there is little chance of collaboration for a successful combined communication system for all parties. Conspicuously, since April 2011 all decisions impacting the CCC have been totally independent from the City. That would not be a problem for us with the exception that the Lake City Fire Department is a CCC participant. Thus, the first issue of your letter is addressed as follows:

Mayor-Council Member  
STEPHEN M. WITT

Vice-Mayor-Council Member  
GEORGE WARD

Council Members  
EUGENE JEFFERSON  
MELINDA MOSES  
ZACK PAULK

City Attorney  
HERBERT F. DARBY

City Manager  
WENDELL JOHNSON

City Clerk  
AUDREY E. SIKES

1) **Backup PSAP.** The County Manager communicated in an email to me on October 26, 2010 that "*when the city/county have resolved their differences, all still maintain the back PSAP "should/will" be placed at the City's public safety building.*" His response was based on city/county differences with no apparent consideration for what is best for the public safety of the citizens of Columbia County and Lake City. The decision on where to locate a backup PSAP should be based solely on a business case analysis regarding what 9-1-1 system processes will best serve our public safety employees and our citizens - not City/County differences.

The initial decision to locate the backup PSAP at the detention facility parking lot within the mobile trailer (as it turned out) was a complete failure, e.g., when needed during Tropical Storm Debby the facility could not be activated when the primary 9-1-1 Center went down. And now, your letter advises that Columbia County is moving all the equipment from the trailer to inside the building and "*Should the need arise, emergency calls can then be handled from the Detention Facility.*" Again, a decision with no concern for public safety!

- a. There are no dispatchers assigned to the detention facility so this is a "COLD" backup which requires primary dispatch center personnel to travel "before" emergency calls can be handled.
- b. A COLD backup is obviously high risk with potential for considerable and pointless delay, and depending upon emergency conditions, travel of dispatch personnel may not be possible at all.
- c. All conditions indicate that continued utilization of the detention facility as the backup will be minus any recognizable level of confidence in providing for the safety of our citizens.

Genuine concerns (not only from the City) have been repeatedly expressed beginning with the first decision in 2011 to locate the backup PSAP at the detention facility. From a public safety perspective, there is no reasoning to show that the detention facility site would be more efficient or dependable than using the LCPD for the backup PSAP. The detention site is unacceptable to the City and should be viewed unacceptable to the County Fire Department and Lifeguard EMS as well. Why create such an "unnecessary" public safety risk to our citizens with this arrangement when there is a much better alternative? Lake City's dispatch already functions as a secondary (PSAP) to the CCC environment and operations and from the outset has been the ideal location for the backup PSAP.

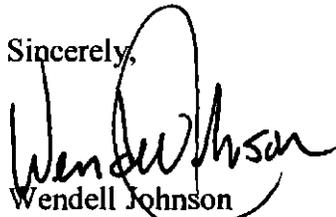
2) **Mutual Aid and Automatic Aid Interlocal Agreement.** There are no identifiable issues that we are aware of which would prohibit the County and City to manage a smooth transition if termination of the Mutual and Auto Aid Agreement occurs. Should the "worst case scenario" become necessary, the City will be amenable to any required time beyond the 90 days to ensure a smooth transition until the City and County CAD systems are changed and fully operational to the satisfaction of all. Otherwise, we feel the 90 day termination clause is adequate.

3) **Lake City Fire Department Dispatching Concerns.** A significant number of incidents relating to Lake City Fire Department Dispatch service by Columbia County for the period June 27, 2012 through January 27, 2013 were provided to you. As noted in your letter, we appreciate that your Staff is reviewing all the records and will respond with corrective actions accordingly. We look forward to a timely and successful outcome.

For a timeframe beginning around August of 2012, as County Public Safety Manager, you led an aggressive planning effort with frequent communications to the City that all stakeholders including the BOCC and County Manager supported the Public Safety Building as the backup PSAP. Then, in December of 2012 you advised "because it was cheaper and quicker" the County Manager had decided the backup would remain at the detention center; a site which is not hardened, a site without live operational personnel, a site with portable radio communication only, and a site absent a number of other features essential to a functional backup PSAP.

In conclusion, from the perspective of City/County differences and the concerns noted above, it does not appear favorable for the City to plan for continued participation with the Columbia County CCC. The Mayor and Council have agreed that it is in the City's best interest for the City Staff to move forward with independent dispatching services by the Lake City Dispatch Center for all our needs, to include Fire Dispatch. Please contact me at your convenience to discuss the transition in detail.

Sincerely,



Wendell Johnson  
City Manager

cc: Lake City Mayor and City Council  
Columbia County BOCC  
Columbia County Sheriff  
Columbia County Manager  
Columbia County Fire Chief  
Lake City Police Chief  
Lake City Fire Chief  
Administrative File

District No. 1 - Ronald Williams  
District No. 2 - Rusty DePratter  
District No. 3 - Bucky Nash  
District No. 4 - Stephen E. Bailey  
District No. 5 - Scarlet P. Frisina

6/20/13  
Agenda



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS • COLUMBIA COUNTY

June 4, 2013

Mr. Wendell Johnson, City Manager  
City of Lake City  
205 North Marion Avenue  
Lake City, Florida 32055

RE: Your Letter Dated March 10, 2013 to David Kraus  
Combined Communications Center (CCC) and  
Public Safety Issues

Dear Wendell:

Your conclusion in the above referenced letter states "\_\_\_\_\_it does not appear favorable for the City to plan for continued participation with the Columbia County CCC. The Mayor and Council have agreed that it is in the City's best interest for the City Staff to move forward with independent dispatching services by the Lake City Dispatch Center for all our needs, to include Fire Dispatch. Please contact me at your convenience to discuss the transition in detail." David has requested that I respond regarding the transition.

As no transition specifics have been provided I would like to suggest a transition date of October 1, 2013. This date is suggested as it coincides with the start of a new fiscal year; therefore, financial impacts can be budgeted. Also, the county has been advised the resulting CAD conversion will require approximately 120 days. October 1, 2013 will provide the necessary conversion time.

This conversion date has not been reviewed and approved by the Board of County Commissioners. Unless issues arise, I will schedule this for discussion on the June 20, 2013 agenda of the Board of County Commissioners. Subject to approval of the Board, I will provide official notice of the county's intent to amend the Combined Communications Center (CCC) Interlocal Agreement.

Though not included in your letter, David requested that I comment to you on both automatic and mutual aid. It is my understanding you have been advised Columbia County has contracted with National Fire Services to perform an ISO/Fire Suppression study. The results of this study will determine if any changes are needed in the automatic aid agreement. I believe mutual aid is

Wendell Johnson, City Manager  
June 4, 2013  
Page 2

good public policy and should always be honored. The ISO/Fire Suppression study should be completed within the next month.

David has also requested that I comment on the maintenance of city hydrants located in unincorporated Columbia County. I do not believe any court ruling requires the county to maintain city hydrants in the unincorporated area of Columbia County. I have posed this question to numerous attorneys and they agree. Regardless, I do not have an issue with county fire staff assisting in the maintenance of hydrants. I believe county fire staff is more than willing to assist. If this type of assistance is beneficial to the City, please advise David or myself.

I found your letter to be insightful; however, I do not agree with many of your comments. Regardless, I regret that a true Combined Communication Center was not achieved. I wish the City success with its dispatch center.

Sincerely,



Dale Williams  
County Manager

DW/cnb

XC: Board of County Commissioners  
Combined Communication Center Members  
Mayor and City Council  
David Kraus, Safety Manager  
Combined Communication Center Interlocal File