

City and County Announce Tentative 9-1-1 Consolidation Plan

DELAWARE – The City of Delaware and Delaware County today announced that ongoing mediation talks have produced a tentative 9-1-1 consolidation agreement. The two sides reported the breakthrough in a joint news conference in the Delaware County Commissioners Building.

Delaware County Common Pleas Judge Everett Krueger, last spring, ordered both parties into mediation after the city filed a lawsuit March 10, 2006, against the county seeking a share of county 9-1-1 levy funds for the city's 9-1-1 system.

The agreement in principle still must be approved by the city council and the county commissioners.

The heart of the agreement is the establishment of a 9-1-1 governing board made up of representatives of various end users, including political subdivisions and organizations representing political subdivisions and emergency service providers. The board will be responsible for management of 9-1-1 services. This is a model that has been used in other Ohio counties that have consolidated 9-1-1 services.

The county also has agreed to pay to the city the 9-1-1 levy funds claimed by the city in its lawsuit. Some funds from past years have already been paid by the county to the city. A second installment will be paid by the county to the city when the agreement to consolidate is ratified by both parties. A final installment will be paid when consolidation is completed.

The two sides met with a representative from the Ohio Commission on Dispute Resolution and Conflict Management on approximately nine different occasions. The rules of mediation required that the discussions remain confidential, so up to this time only the people most closely associated with the dispute and with the operation of 9-1-1 services have been involved in the discussions.

Both the city and county operate 9-1-1 dispatch centers. Since the 1990s, the two sides have been working on consolidating operations as a means of eliminating duplication of services.

Under the agreement, when consolidation occurs the city will terminate its separate 9-1-1 service. The city's dispatchers will all be offered positions with the county and any city dispatcher who chooses to move to the county will be hired.

Representatives of the city and county have been meeting with stakeholders and constituents to explain the agreement and solicit support.

Two other claims contained in the city's original lawsuit, dealing with disbursements to the county law library and the county's obligation to defray costs associated with Delaware Municipal Court prosecutions are subject to further mediation sessions, to be set by the mediator.

MEDIA CONTACT:

Traci Saliba, county public information officer, 740-833-2109
Lee Yoakum city community affairs coordinator, 740-203-1015