



# Lebanon County EMA

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# Answering the Call

- ◆ I'd like to emphasize that so far, we've been able to answer every emergency call.
- ◆ Next, on March 24, 2009, at my request, Dan Kaufman took me to see the north and south mountain tower sites.
- ◆ Also, Mr. Kaufman does not know that I'm making this presentation.

# Commissioner Stohler's Idea

- ◆ Let me start by reminding Mr. Stohler that not too long ago, he wanted to erect a steel building for a training school and for storage of equipment.
- ◆ Recently, I was on a conference call with Senator Casey and commissioners from across PA concerning the Economic Stimulus package.
- ◆ I learned that the Stimulus money can cover County share.

# Commissioner Stohler Flip-Flopped, and now says, “This is all fantasy.”

- ◆ So, I put together a summary of possible grants that we can utilize to make this project happen.
- ◆ Last week, I came to the table to support Commissioner Stohler’s vision.
- ◆ Then, he flip-flopped, and now says, “This is all fantasy.” Why? Is it because he missed the Senator’s call and wants full credit? He can have it. Stohler wanted a new EMA center. I agreed, but needed to know we could pay for a new center.
- ◆ I think we need to look at the whole picture and make a rational decision about our situation and compliance.

# What we have is a Partially Functioning BU Center

## Our 3-year 911 Plan states:

### *2.2. The City/County 9-1-1 System*

In 1977, the County implemented the 9-1-1 emergency calling number for all telephone exchanges located in Lebanon County. Currently the 9-1-1 center is located at 400 South Eighth Street in the city of Lebanon. **There is a partially functioning backup center located at the South Mountain Tower site, RR1, Mountaintop Road, Lititz, PA 17543.**

The system consists of one public safety answering point (PSAP) with central answering and central dispatching to all law enforcement, fire protection, EMS, rescue services, and advanced life support (ALS) within the boundaries of Lebanon County.

Currently Lebanon County utilizes the following PSAP equipment:

- Computer aided dispatch (CAD) system: New World Systems CAD with eight user positions, ver 7.5 (expected go live date is January 2008)
- Customer premises equipment: CML ECS 1000 Sentinel with SEALI
- Mapping software: New World System GEO using ESRI ARC GIS 9.0
- Wireless phase as of September 1, 2007: Phase I (Phase II expected by November 2007)

# Partially Functioning PSAPs

- ◆ What I found at our partially functioning PSAPs were towers of equipment, a generator, and a porta-potty, but no:
  - Consoles,
  - Food,
  - Showers, or
  - Sleeping quarters.
- ◆ If the road is accessible, we can work in shifts, but
- ◆ The bottom line is that the tower sites are NOT adequate.

# Commissioner Stohler said:

- ◆ “We have a backup system. It’s been there for years. I think it’s adequate.”
- ◆ While it may meet the letter of the law, I think there’s room for improvement.

# Disadvantages of our Tower Sites

- ◆ The buildings are small, and will not hold many people.
- ◆ The towers attract lightening.
- ◆ The buildings are not hardened/bomb proof.
- ◆ Dirt and gravel access roads erode.
- ◆ Trees fall across the roads.
- ◆ Access is steep. A 4-wheel drive vehicle is needed to access the north tower.
- ◆ Snow will limit access.

# Equipment

- ◆ Phone lines and phones at the towers were analog, which makes them incompatible with
- ◆ Our current digital system.

# Discussed at Cedar Haven

- ◆ It was at Cedar Haven that Dan Kauffman made us aware of our need for a fully functioning alternate PSAPs. He was asked to put together some numbers for a future presentation.
- ◆ He stopped at several million \$.

# Bond Issue

- ◆ If I recall correctly, we set aside money in a bond issue for an alternate Communications Center, but some of the money was used for radios.
- ◆ I think it's time that we make our partially functioning backup PSAPs fully operational. It's a safety issue.

# What might a 1<sup>st</sup> Class Center Contain?

- ◆ Public Service Answering Points and an
- ◆ Emergency Operations Center that is hardened;
- ◆ Training facility for fire, ambulance, and police;
- ◆ Storage for all of our vehicles and equipment.

Commissioner Stohler said to use a portable system.

- ◆ Commissioner Stohler said, "We don't need to dispatch."
  - Do people stop having heart attacks?
  - Do women stop having babies?
- ◆ Besides, that's not what our guidelines dictate.

# What could decommission our PSAP at the Municipal Building?

- ◆ Flood;
- ◆ Fire; a
- ◆ Bomb Scare? Do we leave the 911 telecommunicators in the building while evacuating the rest of the employees?
- ◆ If not, would they have, "The capability of routing 911 calls to a designated alternate location if all the 911 trunks to the primary PSAP are busy...fail...or...(are) disabled."?
- ◆ Per Title 4, Part V, Chapter 120B, Public Safety Emergency Telephone Program (iii).

# Can we co-locate at Cedar Haven?

- ◆ There are beds, food, and showers at Cedar Haven, but is it hardened?
- ◆ Do we have permission from:
  - The Department of Health?
  - The Division of Life Safety?
- ◆ Will a generator operate the elevators to the 4<sup>th</sup> floor?
- ◆ Unless we use the grass, is parking adequate?

# Growth

- ◆ We all realize that Lebanon County is growing.
  - 500+ homes are planned for South Annville.
  - 600+ homes are proposed for Cornwall.
- ◆ Should there be a disaster, we need to meet the needs of our community.

Commissioner Stohler said that upkeep is an issue.

- ◆ What would happen if we built a new center and decommissioned Station 50?
- ◆ We could:
  - Receive income by renting out Station 50;
  - Level Station 50 for expanded parking; or
  - Sell the property and put the money into the General Fund.

# Opportunity

- ◆ Come September, we'll get a second shot at the Stimulus Package.
- ◆ If we work together to fast track a 911 Center, we can both provide construction jobs and improve public safety with an EMA Center that will serve us for generations to come.
- ◆ I've said my piece. The ball's in your court.