



May 10, 2016

MEMORANDUM TO: Cochise County Board of Supervisors and Sierra Vista City Council

FROM: James E. Vlahovich, County Administrator
Charles P. Potucek, City Manager

SUBJECT: Regional Joint Communications Center Update and Next Steps

On May 12, 2016 at 3:30 p.m. in the Sierra Vista Council Chambers, the Cochise County Board of Supervisors and the Sierra Vista City Council will hold a joint work session. The purpose of this meeting is to brief both bodies on the status of the Regional Joint Communications Center and discuss next steps. This memorandum is being provided as background for that meeting.

Background

For over twelve years, Cochise County and the City of Sierra Vista have discussed and taken steps to establish a Regional Joint Communications Center for the benefit of both organizations, municipalities and fire districts within the county, and our respective residents. Starting with an assessment in 2004, there have been a number of ideas considered, in collaboration with the Cochise County Sheriff.

Several years ago, financial support from a generous benefactor enabled both the County and the City to upgrade their respective communication systems. New consoles were purchased, new dual band radios deployed for law enforcement personnel, and upgrades to the Spillman software system were made as well. Last year, Sheriff Dannels received two grants from Governor Ducey totaling \$1.5 million dollars, to be applied toward the joint communications center. One million dollars of this allocation is coming directly from the Department of Public Safety (DPS) as they would like to utilize this center to dispatch for their troopers in District 9. This can be accommodated by providing them console space in the facility.

After considering several different options, from constructing a new building to co-locating in the City's dispatch center, the Sheriff and City and County staff have identified, inspected and developed a workable plan to purchase and upgrade an existing building. The former DEA building on Paseo San Luis is a solid structure originally constructed for law enforcement purposes that has been vacant for several years. While there are improvements required to make the building usable for the Regional Joint Communications Center, the total cost is significantly less than the cost of new construction and project completion can be accomplished sooner. Staff have conducted a complete analysis of the requirements, developed a detailed budget for the building, furnishings, equipment and communications infrastructure which totals nearly \$3.3 million. The private benefactor who has so generously contributed to the public

safety of the greater Cochise County area so far has committed to pay this cost in order to see this project come to final fruition. The benefactors funding commitment is based on initial cost estimates only. The governor's funding will be needed for unexpected expenditures that come up during development.

Next Steps

The building and equipment are only the initial part of the process. The joint facility and its ongoing operation require a cooperative agreement between the two fiduciary elected bodies, the Board of Supervisors and the Sierra Vista City Council. There are a number of details to be worked out regarding the operation, but in order to start the process and lay the ground work, staff has developed a Memorandum of Understanding, which will be presented to both elected bodies at a meeting scheduled for Thursday, May 12th in the Sierra Vista Council Chambers. The draft of the MOU is attached and will be reviewed with both bodies at the scheduled work session. Also at that meeting, staff will update the elected officials on the progress of the building. We will be prepared to answer any questions you may have about the partnership, the process, and its ongoing operation. Sheriff Dannels and his team will also be in attendance.

Please let us know if you have any questions regarding this project in advance of the work session.

Attachments: Draft Memorandum of Understanding
Project Budget Summary