

**VILLAGE OF PLEASANT PRAIRIE
EMERGENCY MEETING OF THE
PLEASANT PRAIRIE VILLAGE BOARD
9915 39th Avenue
Pleasant Prairie, WI
August 29, 2005
5:00 p.m.**

An Emergency Meeting of the Pleasant Prairie Village Board was held on Monday, August 29, 2005. Meeting called to order at 5:00 p.m. Present were Village Board members John Steinbrink, Alex Tiahnybok, Steve Kumorkiewicz, Jeff Lauer and Mike Serpe. Also present were Mike Pollocoff, Village Administrator; Jean Werbie, Community Development Director; Kathy Goessl, Finance Director/Treasurer and Jane Romanowski, Village Clerk.

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. ROLL CALL

3. NEW BUSINESS

- a) **Receive report from the Village Administrator and Chief of Police concerning actions in the 911-dispatch operation that are endangering Village residents and police officers.**

Mike Pollocoff:

Mr. President, this weekend there was a series of significant events that occurred through the Joint Services Dispatch of 911 that had an adverse effect on police operations in Pleasant Prairie. In a couple instances I believe, and I believe the Chief also believes, that represented a needless threat or bordering on reckless for the safety of our residents. It was a significant departure from how emergency services were provided by the Police Department over the past. It was a unilateral action taken without consultation with the Village. Consequently, in discussions with the Village President, the Police Chief and I felt it was necessary to get the Board together to consider some policy recommendations by resolution as it relates to the events.

What I'd like to do now is Chief Wagner has a report he'd like to present to the Board as to what has transpired from this weekend through today.

Chief Wagner:

Good evening, Mr. President. I've prepared a staff report in the form of a letter to the Board of Trustees, and with your permission I'd like to read that into the record. Mr. President, I'd like permission to read the staff report which I have prepared into the record.

John Steinbrink:

Go ahead.

Chief Wagner:

Thank you. On Saturday August 27, 2005 I was made aware of a disturbing situation that had developed concerning the handling of 911 emergency calls coming from the Village of Pleasant Prairie.

Since the early days of the 911 system in Kenosha County there has been a procedure in place whereby virtually all 911 calls from the Village of Pleasant Prairie that are received at the Kenosha County Joint Services Dispatch Center were immediately transferred to the Pleasant Prairie Police Department. The only exception to this has been EMS calls that are handled by Joint Services so that where appropriate, Emergency Medical Dispatch pre-arrive instructions can be given. Even in those situations, if a law enforcement response is needed, the Pleasant Prairie Police Department has been immediately notified to provide that response.

On Saturday I became aware that the Kenosha County Sheriff's Department has, through a policy that was amended on August 17th and apparently implemented over the weekend, unilaterally and without consultation or even notification, changed this procedure.

Now, 911 callers in the Village of Pleasant Prairie are to be quizzed by dispatchers as to what department they wish to have respond. According to the policy if the caller has no preference, then a Sheriff's car will be sent. We saw this in action Saturday afternoon when a young woman called 911 to report a domestic violence incident at a Pleasant Prairie Mobile Home Court. A Sheriff's Department squad was sent from I94 and County Trunk Highway K and the Pleasant Prairie Police Department was never even notified of the incident despite the fact that Officer Michael Prange, who is here with us this evening, was present on patrol in that very mobile home court at the time of the call. Another Pleasant Prairie officer monitoring the Sheriff's Department's frequency heard the call and alerted our dispatch center, who then had to call the Sheriff's dispatcher by phone to find out what was going on, and that is how Officer Prange found out about this incident. Ultimately, Officer Prange handled this call, and the suspect who had fled while all this was going on was later apprehended in the City of Kenosha. officer Prange could have easily found himself in the middle of a potentially dangerous situation, unaware that the police had been called, without backup and without any information at all.

This change also affects the way that 911 calls are handled when there is no contact with the caller. It is the Sheriff's new policy to dispatch his own cars to these calls in Pleasant Prairie rather than notifying the Pleasant Prairie Police Department for response as has been done in the past. We saw this in action as well on Saturday. A 911 hangup call was received by Joint Services from a large apartment complex in the Village. Per the Sheriff's policy, because no preference was expressed during the phone call because the caller had hung up, a Sheriff's unit was sent from Highway 142 and U.S. 45. At some point after that Pleasant Prairie was requested to respond and back up the county squad. Needless to say, our units arrived quickly, handled the call prior to the arrival of the Sheriff's car. When the deputy did arrive, according to the officers on the scene, he was incredulous that he had been sent at all and inquired of the dispatcher as to why he had been given that call. It was at that point that the deputy was informed of the new policy. Prior to this, even members of the Sheriff's own department were not aware of the change.

Now we have seen over the past two weeks an orchestrated effort on the part of the Sheriff in the Village and in the media. This effort includes the totally uncoordinated and thus I believe unwise and potentially dangerous diversion of Sheriff's cars from other areas of the County into the Village, his announcement of his intentions last week to begin handling calls in Pleasant Prairie, another ill-conceived and again totally uncoordinated move that will do nothing but create confusion among our citizens and inconsistency in the delivery of services because the right hand will not know what the left hand is doing, all of this culminating on Saturday with the Sheriff's announcement that he would seek a contract to provide law enforcement services to the Village of Pleasant Prairie.

Until now I have reserved comment or criticism with respect to the Sheriff's actions. Now, however, the Sheriff has stepped across a line that should never be crossed and has begun manipulating and diverting 911 emergency calls from the Village of Pleasant Prairie to his own department because he apparently somehow thinks that this will enhance his chances of securing that contract and the budget dollars that it would bring. He is placing public safety and the safety of my police officers in jeopardy with what amounts to strong arm tactics, and I will not stand by and allow this to occur.

911 calls are made because people are in need of help, immediately. They should not have to play 20 questions on the phone with the dispatcher about what police agency they want to have respond, and they should not have to wait for the dispatcher to check with a supervisor on how to interpret the Sheriff's latest directive about who to send in what circumstance. This ill-conceived policy change has created a situation whereby that is exactly what happens.

The Sheriff has attempted to cover himself by including in his new policy that the only time calls will be diverted to another agency is in the case of a life threatening situation where, and I quote, "time is of the essence and a Sheriff's squad is too far away to effectively handle the call," end quote. With that language, they are asking the dispatcher to make a judgment that is often difficult and sometimes impossible to make without more information. The bottom line here is that these are emergency calls for help but at the present time, according to the Sheriff's new policy, the apparent default position is to send a Sheriff's car.

On Saturday I called the Sheriff's Department and spoke with their second shift commander, Lieutenant Falduto. I expressed him my concerns and I asked him to contact the Sheriff and request that this new policy be rescinded before someone was hurt. I requested that the Sheriff call me so that we could discuss this. Lieutenant Falduto called back and said that he was unable to contact the Sheriff but that the Chief Deputy had agreed to rescind the policy temporarily for the weekend.

I am calling on the Sheriff to permanently rescind this policy. The Pleasant Prairie Police Department has traditionally had response times under four minutes, typically under four minutes, to the highest priority calls anywhere in the Village. We have patrol areas and staffing levels designed to maintain this low response time, and we have many more squads in Pleasant prairie than the Sheriff does, and I might add far better knowledge of the Village and its citizens. Thus, we are in a better position to serve the Village's law enforcement needs at the present time.

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If at some point in the future the Village decides it wishes to contract with the Sheriff's Department, I believe that it would be in the best interest of our citizens for there at least to be some sort of orderly transition process, not the misguided strong armed attempt to muscle in and take over without adequate consultation, communication or notification that we have here. Regardless of how the Sheriff will try to spin or explain what he is doing, there is no legitimate law enforcement need or purpose for what is being done here. This is purely political and economic and it is reckless and it is wrong.

For now, in the interest of the safety of our citizens and my police officers and the Sheriff's own deputies, I am asking the Sheriff to respect the fact that the Village chooses to provide its own law enforcement services and to stop this interference in law enforcement matters in the Village of Pleasant Prairie. Interference that is motivated not by what is good for the people but rather what he thinks is good for the Sheriff's Department and his prospects for securing a contract that will bring additional dollars to his budget.

In short, I am calling on the Sheriff's Department to immediately resume transferring all 911 calls to the Pleasant Prairie Police Department and to refer all other law enforcement requests coming from the Village to the Pleasant Prairie Police Department.

This afternoon I received an e-mail from the Chief Deputy which said the following and I quote: "All that being said, it is apparent that we modify our initial policy for the safety concerns of the officers of both departments and for the ultimate safety of the public. The following will be implemented effective 8-29-05." The Chief Deputy then goes on in this e-mail to rescind the policy and direct Join Services Dispatch to return to the earlier practice of transferring all law enforcement 911 calls to the Pleasant Prairie Police Department. He further states that they intend to maintain their new presence in the Village and that his deputies will be told to monitor our radio frequency and, quote, "move towards the calls for back up purposes."

I appreciate that the Sheriff finally recognizes the safety concerns that his policy change created both for the public and the officers of both departments. I do still have grave concerns, however, regarding the placement of Sheriff's squads in the Village of Pleasant Prairie and the potential hazards that this can create for officers and the public. Deputies are apparently advised to monitor our radio traffic and to respond to provide needed backup. With all due respect to the Sheriff, I believe that we are in a better position to determine when and if outside assistance is needed, and when it is we will ask for it. This is another example of a poorly thought out policy that ultimately could be dangerous with squads from different areas and different agencies, rather, who are not coordinated and are not communicating converging on an area.

At this point it is my hope that you will join me in the request that I've made of the Sheriff, and I'd be happy to take any questions that you have.

John Steinbrink:

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Chief, before I open it up to questions from other Board members, it came to my attention that the Sheriff was patrolling in one instance on Lakeshore Drive running radar and that. Do you know why that came about or why it came about?

Chief Wagner:

I don't, Mr. President. I've heard only what I've heard in the press with respect to the Sheriff's presence here. We've not received any consultation or information or notification that they were going to be here. Further, with respect to his running radar on 1st Avenue, it's my understanding that he was asked to go on 1st Avenue and run radar there by a Village Trustee. Beyond that I really don't have any information.

John Steinbrink:

It puzzles me because when we came to this understanding with the Sheriff's Department years ago there was great concern on the western end of the County that there weren't enough squads to respond to the calls out there. People were complaining about the response time and the lack of response out there. And when the squads were freed up from the Village area that allowed more squads to be present in that area which seemed to satisfy people and make them a lot happier. And it concerns me that squads are responding here from that great of a distance. It jeopardizes not only our officers and citizens but the citizens in the western end of the County. So I think there should be some understanding in the departments and there should be some dialogue here.

Chief Wagner:

I agree.

John Steinbrink:

Questions for the chief?

Mike Serpe:

Chief, do we know that that 911 policy about the questioning of which squad you want to respond was just specific to Pleasant Prairie, or did it include the City, Twin Lakes and/or Silver Lake?

Chief Wagner:

It's my understanding that the policy itself is rather generic. There have been some communications that we are in possession of from the Chief Deputy that refer specifically to Pleasant Prairie and direct Joint Services what to do in the event they receive a request for police service coming from the Village of Pleasant Prairie. In those cases the dispatcher is to question the caller as to what agency--to tell the caller, in fact, that since the Sheriff's Department is now servicing Pleasant Prairie they are then to go on and question as to what agency the caller would like to have respond. And that's specific to the Village.

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Jeff Lauer:

I have some questions but they might be answered. I see Sheriff Beth is out in the audience. Can he be able to speak before I--Sheriff Beth might say something that I might have asked the Chief on.

John Steinbrink:

After we're finished with questions of the Chief then we'll allow the Sheriff to speak.

Jeff Lauer:

I have a couple of questions thinking of right away in your comments you made. Did you obtain the written policy about residents being quizzed 20 questions?

Chief Wagner:

I did. I have a copy of their Policy 450 which, as I indicated in my comments, apparently has been rescinded as of this afternoon. Policy 450 is rather generic in the way that it's written. I would refer you rather to the guidance which the Chief Deputy provided in his e-mail of August 25th. I'll just reads that e-mail and that perhaps will answer your question. This is from the Chief Deputy to Sheriff Clerical/Sheriff Supervisor Staff I believe. "Now that the Sheriff's Policy 450 has been revised, residents from Pleasant Prairie may start calling our office for a Sheriff's squad. In the past when the caller requested police service in Pleasant Prairie, we would advise them to call the Pleasant Prairie Police." And this is in bold type: "Now when a Prairie resident calls and wants police service, we will politely ask them if they would like a Sheriff's Squad as we do service the Prairie. If they say yes we will forward to dispatch and tell the call taker that this is a Prairie resident and they request a Sheriff's Squad. If they say no, they still want a Prairie squad we will advise them as before to call the Pleasant Prairie Police."

There is another e-mail that might assist you as well. This is an e-mail that was sent out Saturday Afternoon and was sent to Lieutenant Ratzburg who is the on duty supervisor in my department. Lieutenant Ratzburg actually called the Sheriff's Department when all this began to happen to inquire as to what was going on. He received in return an e-mail from Lieutenant Falduto who I believe is there second shift commander. What this e-mail says is: "Here is the e-mail I told you about. As I told you on the phone, after this was sent to our Dispatch Supervisors who questioned what would occur on a 911 hangup call. It was decided that if no one was available to make the decision on which Agency was preferred that a KSD squad would be dispatched. . If no KSD backup was available, then a PPPD backup squad would be requested. This is what occurred in this matter. Your dispatcher was told that KSD was requesting a PPPD backup for the 911 hangup. I don't know why you weren't advised of that, but that is what occurred. In addition, if no KSD squad is available or close, and it is a safety situation, dispatch has been instructed to immediately contact PPPD on all calls of that nature." That's from Lieutenant Paul Falduto.

Jeff Lauer:

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To my understanding from what I read and heard you speak, if the Sheriff's Department is making a dispatch or talking from what I read Pleasant Prairie Police can pick it up on their frequency?

Chief Wagner:

That's correct. We do scan the Sheriff Department's frequency.

Jeff Lauer:

So they know if a Sheriff Department is handling a call--

Chief Wagner:

Sometimes they--

Jeff Lauer:

What happens? Does that mean Pleasant Prairie doesn't show up, or at least officers are aware that if there is clear and present danger maybe they should--

Chief Wagner:

That's actually what happened in the case down at the mobile home court. An officer on the road happened to hear that call over the Sheriff's frequency. But I must remind everybody that while we scan that frequency we're not glued to it. We have other things we need to be listening to and we have other things we need to be doing. And it's very possible that something may occur where we miss that dispatch from the Sheriff's Department. And when that happens, and had that happened in the case of the domestic call on Saturday, then we would have had no clue until the Sheriff's Department had showed up down there that there had even been a call for service down there or that there had been any incident at all. And that creates a hazard, because I've got people down in that trailer court on patrol, and it could have been very, very bad had that officer--he could have found himself in the middle of a situation he knew nothing about and was not prepared to handle and had no information and that's hazardous.

Jeff Lauer:

Okay, thanks.

Mike Serpe:

Just to go on what Brian is saying on monitoring calls on the radio, there is the possibility for dispatch to send a squad on a call without any radio traffic and that goes over the mobile computer. Naturally, I don't think that's being done on any major call where there's potential for danger or serious harm to anybody. But the possibility does exist that calls can go out and

nobody is going to hear them because it's done through the computer. And all squads in Kenosha County, at least that I know of, Pleasant Prairie, Kenosha Sheriff and City have the mobile data equipment.

Alex Tiahnybok:

As a relatively new member of the Board, at this point I feel the best I can do is maybe provide a perspective, and I like to view it as a 30,000 foot view. I think what's occurred over the course of the last couple of weeks is a symptom and not the disease itself. There's something going on historically, and I think this is before Chief Wagner's or Sheriff Dave Beth's tenure in their offices, that has led to the situation we're facing today.

I'm from Illinois originally, and only over the course of the last handful of weeks did I come to realize that it appears as though the Sheriff's Department is really not welcome in Pleasant Prairie. I lived in Mt. Prospect, Illinois. I lived in Gurnee, Illinois, and I frequently saw Lake County Sheriff's cars in Gurnee. I frequently saw Cook County Sheriff's cars in Mt. Prospect and there wasn't a problem. For some reason, and I really would love to get some feedback, and I think a lot of other people would be interested to find out also is how did this all get started.

I'm a taxpayer here and I look at my tax bill and, of course, I gladly pay my taxes to the Village of Pleasant Prairie and to Kenosha County, and as far as I know part of that Kenosha County tax is to pay for Sheriff services. And if that very department is somehow unwelcome in Pleasant Prairie only under the most dire circumstances and emergencies, I'm wondering from a taxpayer's perspective are we getting our money's worth. How did this all get started, first off?

Chief Wagner:

Mr. Tiahnybok, with respect to your question, let me just say that two police agencies cannot effectively police a community at the same time. There are issues of coordination. There are issues of information sharing. There are issues of just plain out flat out safety that come into question when you've got two law enforcement agencies who are not related to each other trying to service the same community. In this situation the Village of Pleasant Prairie staffs and funds its own police department, and that decision was made for better or for worse depending on your perspective by this Village Board. When another outside agency comes in and begins to try to deliver police services concurrently with the home agency that creates problems. And it creates conflicts and it creates potentially a dangerous situation. And this is why in my view, not that anybody is not welcome, my position is that there ought to be one police agency. Otherwise you've got a situation where residents are being confused about who is delivering their police services. And we kind of lose sight at that point what the ultimate mission is, and that's controlling and resolving crime. And if we're not in a position to make certain that we know exactly what's happening in the Village and that something isn't going on at another agency that we're not aware of, it really makes it difficult to fulfill that mission.

So a decision has to be made at some point. Which agency do you want? It becomes very difficult. If it's going to be the Board's decision that two agencies concurrently police a community that I think is a recipe for problems and for trouble.

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Mike Pollocoff:

I might add, with respect to your other comment as far as from a tax standpoint, the tax equity study that was prepared evaluated the fact that the Village has a Police Department and the Village funds that Police Department to the level desired, the level of service that this Village Board has requested. The Village also through the County levy pays for a good portion of what the Sheriff's Department delivers that's patrol related. There's no question that those residents pay for the jail and a number of other menu of County services, but one of the items looked at was patrol services. To take and say that the amount of patrol services that are paid for by the Village is now going to be put into the Village, again under a separate command, one, that budget that was established by the Sheriff presumably was to patrol those unincorporated areas where there was no police presence. We contribute to their budget to an extent that they provide police protection to an area that already has police protection, and they would have budgeted to do that and not provide protection in Pleasant Prairie.

If in fact they've done that, they've decided that they're going to provide police protection as they deem necessary or fit with or without the knowledge of Pleasant Prairie, then you come back to the same situation that Chief Wagner is talking about. They're taking their resources and using them in a manner that doesn't effectively and efficiently deliver the public safety services that we need.

So the tax equity thing is an issue and it's an issue that's going to be resolved either by the County as they address their budget, or it's going to be an issue that's going to be resolved in Mr. Beth's proposal to contract out or provide a contract for services. But the tax equity issue is not a vehicle to take and introduce two agencies in the community at the same time. It's apples and oranges.

Steve Kumorkiewicz:

If I understand correctly, Mr. President, Statute Number 66 in the Village . . . is one section in which they talk about populations under 55,000 they could request Village, the service or . . . with the Sheriff. I do believe that provision has been changed lately. That a population over 55,000 may, it doesn't say the Sheriff can take over the police department. Am I correct in that?

John Steinbrink:

I believe it's 5,500 or under.

Steve Kumorkiewicz:

Yes. So I fail to understand here why the Sheriff is here. We've never got a problem before. All of a sudden we've got these problems after all these years. I've lived in the Village for 42 years from the time it was a Township with 6,500 people. At the time I realized back in the '60s . . . problem with the Sheriff because we didn't have no problems. The County serviced the Village because we had only one part-time squad. But those things changed. When we became a Village part of the requirement for the Village is to have our own police, fire and . . . that's why we

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became a Village. And this was the time in which the service of the Sheriff actually stopped being here in Pleasant Prairie. So I don't understand. I fail to understand why somebody comes with those changes. I have a big problem with that. I really think the Sheriff should stay west of I-94. I love this Village. I see the police patrols all the time in and out of the subdivisions, two or three times a shift. We've got four or five cars. I don't believe the Sheriff can provide the services unless he got a larger budget which is going to mean a larger increase in the corporate taxpayers. Somebody explain that to me.

Mike Serpe:

Getting back to Alex's comment that something may have happened here in the past, and something probably did happen in the past I'm sure quite a while ago. Even if it did, is it right to jeopardize the safety of the public, the police officers and the Sheriff's deputies just to prove a point? That makes no sense to me whatsoever and somebody has got to explain to me how that works.

Alex Tiahnybok:

I certainly agree with you, Mike. Public safety is the number one concern. Whatever happened in regards to the motivations behind the 911 screening and processing that's a mystery to me also. But I guess going off of Steve's comments, I'm certainly not an expert in this field, but I think police departments and governments operate on jurisdictions, and the Village of Pleasant Prairie is the Village of Pleasant Prairie. The County Sheriff's Department is all of the County of Kenosha including Pleasant Prairie. So still I can't buy the argument of the Sheriff's Department staying out of Pleasant Prairie because we've got our own police department. I don't think the County Sheriff's Department is going to stay off of I-94, because I see them there quite often, because it's a federal highway. Where does the conflict between the Sheriff's Department and the State Police how is that handled in terms of dispatch and stepping all over each other. I have a hard time with that argument.

To confirm Chief Wagner's comment about a Trustee that lives in Carol Beach asking for that service. I certainly wasn't motivated to open a can of worms by making that request. But I saw Sheriff Beth at the County Fair and he asked me how things are going. And I told him that my neighborhood has a speeding problem, and I told him that Chief Wagner has addressed the problem and posted officers much more often than I think Carol Beach has seen in years. He said, well, we cover Kenosha County. And I said, you're welcome on my street any time you want. And I did that as a private citizen, not as Trustee Alex. I think I have the right to do that as citizen Alex. So, again, the whole argument about jurisdiction, Mike you're a former police officer from Kenosha, and would you expect not to see the Sheriff's Department or the State Police in Kenosha?

Mike Serpe:

Alex, I always felt as a police officer the more red lights at the scene the better. Kenosha County Sheriff's Department has every right to go anywhere in Kenosha County that they want and they do. What we're talking about here tonight is not their ability to do a process serving on a residence, to pick up somebody on a warrant on a residence in the Village that they're looking

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for. I don't think anybody has a problem with that. The problem here tonight is dispatching and asking the citizens who do you want to show up for your call? Alex, I can tell you I was a cop for 28 years. I worked dispatch before the County and the City joined up in Joint Services. I worked answering emergency lines. There is nothing worse than hearing somebody on the end of that line screaming for help, and as a dispatcher I'm going to say would you like the Sheriff or would you like the Police Department to show up? That is absolutely ludicrous.

Alex Tiahnybok:

I couldn't agree with you more. I think this 911–

Mike Serpe:

That's what this meeting is all about tonight.

Alex Tiahnybok:

Right, somehow we got off on a tangent.

Mike Serpe:

As far as any problems between the Sheriff's administration and the Pleasant Prairie Police administration, we have a very competent Chief, a very competent Chief Deputy and a Sheriff. if they wish to get together and argue those things out and come up with a resolution, have at it. Everybody could benefit by that.

Alex Tiahnybok:

Right, I welcome that.

Mike Serpe:

But this is not the way to go.

Alex Tiahnybok:

I agree with you. Again, public safety is the number one concern, and I don't think there should be any confusion at the 911 level wherever it's done, whether it's County wide or in the Village. So I absolutely agree with you, Mike. The situation regarding this specific event or these specific events, the situation that may have precipitated things further which was the incident that happened whatever it was, August 9th, on the south end of Carol Beach with the drowning in Lake Michigan, certainly. I think the Sheriff and the Chief need to get together and iron out these issues and make an efficient system out of it.

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John Steinbrink:

Alex, I think we've shown several scenarios here we had over the weekends, the trailer park incident and the incident at Hidden Oaks. Had that incident at Hidden Oaks, that was a 911 hangup, and somebody in need of medical assistance and he dropped the phone and he had to wait for that squad to come from Highway 45 and 142, which is several townships away out at the west end of the County, and the response then become after the deputy arrived to find the person had a heart attack, then all the services we provide as far as rescue and paramedic would have been for nothing and a life would have been lost probably. That's what we're trying to avoid here today.

Alex Tiahnybok:

I agree.

John Steinbrink:

We want to reach a resolution here that protects the citizens of this Village and make sure that they receive the best service possible in the most expedient amount of time and get the best coverage out here. And at the same time we understand that law enforcement officers need to be protected also. If you're left out there blind not knowing what one hand or the other hand is doing, your life is in jeopardy. Their job is hard enough as it is and we don't need to complicate it with bureaucratic mess ups and that's what we're here to resolve tonight.

Jeff Lauer:

I'd like to say, and no offense to anybody and don't take anything personal, because most of you know me. But I think it would be great if maybe the Village had 100 police officers. We could almost have one patrol for every neighborhood we have. And would that be the best service or not? I guess the question comes down to service. What it really comes down to and I will say it because I believe most of the body up here will not say it but I will. The reason we are here tonight is because for the past week or two it's been in the paper that Sheriff David Beth may want a contract with the Village to save taxpayers' dollars, which he has a legal right to do. It was passed by and signed by the Governor recently, voted I believe it was unanimously by the State Assembly which I know John Steinbrink voted in favor of because everybody wants to save tax dollars. They don't want duplicate service and so on and so on. And I'd like to--

John Steinbrink:

Jeff, I'd just like to correct you first. Act 40 is on the part of a Village or a City to pass a resolution asking the Sheriff's Department for that service, not for the Sheriff's Department to impose that service.

Jeff Lauer:

I don't think the Sheriff's Department can impose anything without the Village Board approving it, correct? It's just like anybody else who wants to come and blacktop the streets in Pleasant

Prairie, the come, they'll give you a contract and you vote on it. But getting back to my statements I'd like to make, I know in your statement, Chief, you said strong arm tactics. Well, this is strong arm tactics against the Sheriff's Department now. I look around and it looks like we have two news media cameras here. I didn't notify them. I don't know if Sheriff Beth did, but somebody notified them to try to take shots at the Sheriff's administration. Because I've lived in Pleasant Prairie most all my life and this is what happens if you have an idea or you go against a certain group in the Village and this happens. It's happened since I've been elected and I don't think we should do that. I don't think we should go after and try and to hang somebody out to dry. That's what some people are trying to do is make the Sheriff's Department look bad in this case, and we shouldn't be doing that. If you want to handle it diplomatically maybe Sheriff Beth could have been contacted, set up a meeting, so on and so forth.

But now it's in the public media. I see faces here and I wonder how they found out the meeting was coming tonight. It seems how I didn't receive a phone call but received an e-mail. And when I was going through my orientation I was told that if there is ever an emergency meeting we will call you. But I found out there was an e-mail sent yesterday, Sunday, which is usually a family day and I'm not in town. But besides the point, strong arm tactics, Sheriff Beth, obviously it's happening to you now and I will say that publicly. I have no problem doing that. The people in the Village know how the system works down here. So I'm looking forward to hearing the other side of the story and then the Board can make a decision based on their comments. I know it's going to come down to service and this and that. We can define what service is, but we have to remember, too, the Village taxpayers do pay tax dollars for the Sheriff's Department. If the Village does not want to do that then they're going to have to contact the County and make the appropriate motion for that if possible.

But I think if cooler minds prevail you should just sit down, relax and discuss the matter. Because I don't believe we would be here tonight if those articles had not been in the newspaper last week. I honestly believe that. Again, I don't want anybody--Chief Wagner don't take it personal. I try to look at all sides and that way I can make an effective decision on all sides. But strong armed tactics I see it now again. And the people of Pleasant Prairie knows how it works.

John Steinbrink:

Further comments or questions for the Chief?

Steve Kumorkiewicz:

I want to express my confidence in the Pleasant Prairie Police Chief.

John Steinbrink:

Chief, thank you. I think at this time Trustee Lauer has asked that the Sheriff be given a chance to speak and I guess it's the Sheriff's time to respond. If we could just have your name and address for the record.

Sheriff Beth:

Sheriff David Beth, B-E-T-H, and my address at work is 1000 55th Street, Kenosha. Thank you for this opportunity. A lot of the points I was going to bring up I'm not even quite sure I have to anymore. I think it was commented I think the reason we're here tonight is because of articles that have been in the paper and the offer I'm going to make. I like to deal with truths. I found out about this meeting about an hour and a half ago because one of our County Board Supervisors was told by Mr. Pollocoff that I was invited to this meeting. Neither by phone, by e-mail, by letter I was never contacted by this office. And if I would not have confirmed that with you, I would not even have been sure that it was going on.

Supervisor Clark I informed him of all the circumstances that was going on. He thought it was very interesting himself. And Mr. Serpe has called almost everybody in the world to try to figure out what to do with this situation and me approaching this Board next Tuesday night. They all come to me, too, Mr. Serpe. The letter that Mr. Wagner read, unfortunately I did not have time to create such a letter because, again, I was notified an hour and a half ago of this meeting. And I'm surprised that this dealt just with such an emergency, I'm surprised that the Sheriff was not notified of the circumstances of what was going on.

I'd like to go back again of facts of what happened. I have facts with me. I have the video dispatch tapes of what happened. There's no screaming. There's no one throwing the phone down, and one of the calls wasn't even a 911 call. And you're going to hear that our dispatcher called Pleasant Prairie to notify them of the call. Truthfully, if I would have been asked to make this presentation before this entire thing started, you wouldn't even have this meeting.

Mr. Steinbrink, the picnic that you were at yesterday with UAW I was approached by at least 20 to 30 people that absolutely praised the Sheriff's Department for coming into the Village. And part of what I'm going to say next Tuesday night is Mr. Pollocoff in a recent news article said people tell him that Pleasant Prairie is a tax hell. Well, I would like to address that tax hell. And I would like to give this Board the opportunity to provide the same services which next Tuesday I will inform you of what we can do for this Village and the immense tax savings that will come along with it to every Village resident.

We talk about Sheriff's jurisdiction. My jurisdiction goes half way through Lake Michigan. It goes to Walworth County. It goes to the Illinois State Line and it goes to Racine County. The 16,000 people that live in Pleasant Prairie I am their Sheriff as much as I am anyone else's. We respond to the City of Kenosha for more calls, or almost as many calls, as we do to any jurisdiction outside the City of Kenosha. We back up. We make traffic stops. We do it in Twin Lakes. We do it in Silver Lake. We have a contract with Paddock Lake. Every single jurisdiction within Kenosha County we respond to. To say that you don't want the Sheriff's Department in this Village is absurd. You paid for a tax survey, whatever the thing was called, double taxation, this Board pushed for it. It came out. And if you re-read it closely it talks about the Village of Pleasant Prairie researching contract services with the Sheriff's Department.

Assembly Bill 79, Mr. Steinbrink, that directly addresses this, that was a 95 to nothing vote. You voted in favor it. And I'm going to have a lot of information of different organizations and villages and municipalities that voted in favor of it. That was in order to save tax dollars.

To say that we aren't invited here, truly as a Sheriff's Department we don't have to be invited here. We go through every jurisdiction, not to trample them, we back them up and we take calls. In the past we have been told that through this double taxation survey we have been told that we didn't provide the services. I am very proud--when I came into the Sheriff's Department we were 13 deputies down. I am at full staff of deputy sheriffs. And part of that tax equity said you weren't getting patrol coverage. I am directly addressing that right now. Every citizen that I talked to in the last two weeks gave nothing but applause for the fact that we are back.

At the UAW picnic, I think I addressed this already, too. Part of what they said was, and I wasn't even going to bring this up but I'm going to, it says it sounds like you're ruffling some feathers in the kingdom. My purpose is not to ruffle feathers in any kingdom. Mine is to provide the best services to the taxpayers of Kenosha County and I am the Sheriff of Pleasant Prairie. I am going to make an offer to Pleasant Prairie. You don't have to take it. I cannot take over the Village of Pleasant Prairie Police Department. But I will offer the citizens of Kenosha County and Pleasant Prairie the opportunity to save literally millions of dollars in the next few years. So, there were a lot of issues I was going to address, but I think this Board covered most of them.

Police officers deal with facts. The four page letter, obviously, that Chief Wagner wrote he should have actually done the investigation and had the facts, because I'm going to allow you to listen to them as soon as I can plug it in, and you can listen to the 911 calls. Pleasant Prairie was notified of the one. Our dispatcher called their dispatch. And the second one was not 911 and there weren't 20 questions to see who they wanted. As a police officer you always make sure you have the facts. If there's any questions I can answer before I play these tapes, please let me know.

Mr. Pollocoff, can I use your microphone since there's a plug right by you? Thank you.

(Tape played)

That was the very first call. That was the call for the 911 hangup call. As you can see, the Sheriff's Department made a direct call from dispatch. That was a dispatcher named Renee Rieselman. That was a direct phone call to the Pleasant Prairie Police Department notifying them of the call. Fact.

Mike Serpe:

Dave, can I ask you a question please?

Sheriff Beth:

Yes, I'm sorry.

Mike Serpe:

Prior to this weekend, when that same type of call came into the dispatch center, the Joint Service building, communication center, and it was a 911 hangup, did you automatically a Sheriff's squad to that call and then notify the agency in Pleasant Prairie, or did you transfer that 911 call out to

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Pleasant Prairie since it wasn't an EMD call and let the Pleasant Prairie squads handle it? What was your policy prior to this weekend.

Sheriff Beth:

Prior to this weekend?

Mike Serpe:

Yes.

Sheriff Beth:

Prior to this weekend it was the same thing. Two weeks ago we did the policy. So we have started addressing the fact that Pleasant Prairie has paid double taxation and we are sending Sheriff's cars.

Mike Serpe:

I understand. Then let's go back two weeks. Prior to whenever you implemented this change, was that your policy to send a Sheriff's squad and notify the Pleasant Prairie dispatch center that you were doing so? Or, did you just transfer that call to the Pleasant Prairie Police Department? That's my question.

Sheriff Beth:

Two weeks ago we'd transfer to the Pleasant Prairie Police Department.

Mike Serpe:

So you've changed the policy now?

Sheriff Beth:

There is no question. We were addressing issues that this Board asked in double taxation. No question. This is the second one.

(Tape played)

Just to let you know this did not come in on 911. This came in on the non emergency line.

(Tape continued)

That was supposedly the second 911 call. . . . asked for a restraining order an information on that. There was no pressure. And that wasn't anyone screaming. That wasn't anyone that threw the

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phone to the ground. That addressed both calls. Both of them I feel showed inaccuracies in the letter that you received dealing with the facts.

Mike Serpe:

A question for you, Sheriff.

Sheriff Beth:

Ready.

Mike Serpe:

The hangup call, the squad responded from Highway 45 and 142, is that correct?

Sheriff Beth:

I didn't have time to do all this because I found out about an hour and a half ago.

Mike Serpe:

Would you take us at our word?

Sheriff Beth:

At this point truthfully no.

Mike Serpe:

That's unfortunate. Then the trailer park call that squad responded from I-94 and K, is that correct?

Sheriff Beth:

You're saying information that I can't . . . one way or the other.

Mike Serpe:

. . . the same information, Dave, that you got on paper. I'm reading the report.

Sheriff Beth:

I don't have any information on paper.

Mike Serpe:

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Do you really think that's a wise move? Unless this car from 142 and 45 went 10-39, emergency run, to the call at the apartment building, that could have been an emergency hangup, somebody having a heart attack, somebody having a seizure, you think that's a wise move to send a car from that distance into Pleasant Prairie and we're taking into consideration public safety?

Sheriff Beth:

That's exactly why dispatcher Renee Riesselmann called Pleasant Prairie to let them know this call is going on. It was taken care of. The closest agency was notified so that was directly addressed.

Mike Serpe:

Okay. And the trailer park incident, assuming that the information we have is correct—

Sheriff Beth:

I think that is the trailer park incident, isn't it?

Mike Serpe:

A domestic situation, Dave, we read in the paper all the time police officers being killed on domestic violence situations, citizens being killed by husbands or wives, a constant thing across America today, a very, very volatile dangerous situation, Officer Prange was probably less than a block away from that call and probably could have run into a situation that could have got him in serious trouble had that turned bad, and it could have very well turned bad. We don't know that. Thank God it didn't. What we're getting to, Dave, is this, and before you said I called a million people, I didn't call anybody reference this incident about the policy change. My calls were hopefully to save some embarrassment to everybody about the contract services that you're about to offer. Those were my calls. I was just trying to divert a situation that may look like it was getting a little bit volatile and a little bit too controversial for your office as well as this Board. I just wanted to divert that. That was the reason for my calls, okay? I'm not campaigning for anybody yet. I just want to make that clear, too.

Sheriff Beth:

As will I, Mr. Serpe.

Mike Serpe:

All we're trying to say, Dave, is we have a police department. I don't have any objection to the Sheriff's Department being in Pleasant Prairie to do what they have to do, drive through, have a cup of coffee with a Pleasant Prairie cop. I have no objection to that. What can be hurt by two agencies getting along good, very well. I don't know what you're going to present Tuesday night. I'm very interested to see what it is and I will give you that opportunity. But I don't think we're doing the citizens of this community, and just aside from Pleasant Prairie, all of Kenosha County, when you're sending cars from another jurisdiction that they're assigned to patrol into

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this Village to answer calls that we have a very capable and competent police department to do so. If we run into a problem that we can't handle the calls, we will put that call out to you, can you give us assistance, Mr. Sheriff. Or, if you can't do it because you're tied up, can you give us assistance, State Patrol? If they can't do it we'll call the City. We'll call somebody. But we'll call when we need that help. I don't have a problem with that.

Sheriff Beth:

Mr. Serpe, just so you know, the squads that we send are what we would call an extra car. We would not send one of our district cars unless it was a backup or emergency. So when you talk about taking them from other jurisdictions, the area cars do not come to Pleasant Prairie. We are addressing this situation with the double taxation with cars because, as I said, we're up to full staff and rather than running the Interstate we're trying to address this. And, truthfully, I am very happy and by the cross-section of citizens I've talked to they are thrilled that we are here.

Mike Serpe:

I'm glad for that, Dave. And I think we've got to separate two things. Number one we are talking about a policy change that was implemented this weekend that caused this meeting to take place tonight. That's one. And you're talking about double taxation and offering contract services to the Village and that's another. I think we have to separate these two. Tonight is a matter of public safety issue and that's why we're here tonight.

Sheriff Beth:

That's why I'm here, too.

Mike Serpe:

I understand that policy has been rescinded temporarily. That tells me that it could come back into place at sometime in the future. I think we have to move on. I think we have to get your department and our department talking to one another again so relations are as they should be. I would love to see that and I hope it does take place. I sincerely do. You and I never worked side by side as officers, but I always respected your position as a deputy, and I know I got the same in return.

Sheriff Beth:

Yes, you did.

Mike Serpe:

Because I did my job and I did it the best I could, and I have the utmost respect for your right hand man, Chuck Smith.

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Sheriff Beth:

Thank you.

Mike Serpe:

I always had and I always will have. You've got a good man there. Work with us together and we'll make this a better community, not just in Pleasant Prairie, but all of Kenosha County.

Jeff Lauer:

I think just a couple quick comments here. I think this issue keeps coming up and Sheriff Beth rescinded his policy. Well, if you did that's good. It shows that he's trying to work with Pleasant Prairie. Pleasant Prairie's balked and Chief Wagner balked and I don't know if anybody else did so he rescinded. And the question, Sheriff Beth for the record, are you trying to use strong arm tactics in any way, shape or form in Pleasant Prairie?

Sheriff Beth:

I'm doing nothing that we don't do in every other jurisdiction within Kenosha County. If you read Policy 450 it deals with Twin Lakes, Silver Lake, City of Kenosha, and we respond to calls of service that people call us for. That's something we've always done and, truthfully, it's something we're always going to do. I look forward to being here next Tuesday.

Like Mr. Serpe said this is probably two different situations, but they're probably both very related. I look forward to next Tuesday and any discussion that will go along with that. I've told my officers and the officer that supposedly didn't know about this, I looked it up, we did have time to get--he had the policy two weeks ago when it came out. So why he said that I don't know if he actually did. But I think I've addressed most of the issues. I'm still open for questions, but other than that I look forward to next Tuesday.

Alex Tiahnybok:

911 emergency calls for all of Kenosha County go to a common center in the City of Kenosha, correct?

Sheriff Beth:

Correct.

Alex Tiahnybok:

All 911 regardless of county, incorporated area, it doesn't matter?

Sheriff Beth:

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All go into the public safety building, correct.

Alex Tiahnybok:

Perhaps a better question for Chief Wagner. Of the calls for police services coming from Pleasant Prairie, and if you don't know the answer I don't blame you, but percentage wise what's 911 calls versus general non emergency?

Chief Wagner:

I would have to get back to you on that. I have not done that research, but I would be happy to provide that information for you at a later date.

Alex Tiahnybok:

Okay. And the point behind my question, again, is as a taxpayer if somebody is calling 911 and saying help me what's wrong with a Kenosha Sheriff's Department car responding and a Pleasant Prairie Police Department car responding? What's wrong with that? If it's not an emergency, send the Village and the County won't even know about it. But if it's an emergency and somebody is calling 911 and saying help me, as a taxpayer--I will not change my mind about this. As a taxpayer in Pleasant Prairie until we're not paying taxes to support the Sheriff's Department, which I'm sure Sheriff Beth doesn't want to see happen, until we stop paying taxes to support the Sheriff's Department I expect to see the Sheriff's Department in Pleasant Prairie. I don't think there's any other way. And if it's an emergency then let's handle it like an emergency. If a Sheriff's Department car happens to be closer, then it will arrive first. If a Pleasant Prairie car is closer it will arrive first, because I think Sheriff Beth has demonstrated that if it's a 911 call, the Pleasant Prairie Police Department is going to get notified about it immediately.

Mike Serpe:

Alex, I'm going to best I can answer that which you just said. Assuming that a call comes in of some substance and a Sheriff squad responds to a Pleasant Prairie address and takes that call, and now it requires further follow-up investigation. And as further follow-up investigations get somewhat involved where they might end up being multiple cases say entry into the home or a burglary or an armed robbery or whatever, all of a sudden now instead of one department handling that particular call and doing the follow up on it, now you're involving two agencies and that coordination sometimes is not easy to maintain, because now all the information that the deputy took initially has to be shared with the Pleasant Prairie officer. You're creating a nightmare to happen here.

I agree with you, I don't care how many cars of the Sheriff's Department I see in Pleasant Prairie. That doesn't bother me. And when it comes to the tax equity thing I don't know that we're ever going to get over the fact that we're going to have to pay for Sheriff patrols whether we use them or not. My personal opinion is they're going to come in here and serve papers, they're going to serve process and they're going to do certain things that they do and we're going to pay for that. The \$3.2 or \$3.5 million when it all boils down if it were to happen would probably be if we're lucky get half of that. And as far as the Sheriff's Department goes, I don't care about maybe

\$100,000 a year that we're paying them to patrol that they're not getting here because we may need them some day and they still have a function to do and they're doing it. They're still running prisoners back and forth to the jail, to the courthouse; they're still doing all kinds of items that the Sheriff's Department has to do including be our backup if we need them. So we pay for that.

But as far as one department being closer to that call than the other, that's not good. It's good to be there for the backup, but let the primary agency take that call because that just makes things run more efficient. You want to talk about wasting a lot of tax money, you'll do exactly that with what you just said.

Alex Tiahnybok:

And just to throw your advice back at me we're talking about safety here. And perhaps I won't get re-elected in two years, but taxpayers can suffer if it comes down to public safety. So I'm trying to respect your advice and take it. If it comes down to a matter of nomenclature who's the primary responder and secondary responder, make the Kenosha Sheriff's Department secondary responder in all circumstances but respond. Show up. Flashing lights isn't it good? Again, until we're not paying for it I believe they have--and, again, I think Sheriff Beth pointed out very accurately he doesn't need to ask for permission. His jurisdiction goes out to the middle of the lake.

Chief Wagner:

I don't have an objection to Sheriff's squads coming into the Village being here and patrolling. I think that's fine, or even running radar in the Village. What I have an objection to is the totally uncoordinated way this was done. They didn't call us up and say, hey, we're going to be putting squads in the Village. There's no coordination between the two departments with respect to what those squads are going to be doing or where they're going to be. What really for me causes me some heartburn is in the paper the other day when the Sheriff announced that he was going to begin handling calls here, because that creates a situation where now you've got two agencies in a totally uncoordinated manner responding to a certain point. If you've got two agencies responding to one call and they're not communicating and that response is not coordinated that creates a situation whereby it can be hazardous.

And what I would had is that law enforcement and police work, and Mike knows this, is a hazardous business to begin with. When our folks come on duty every day they come on duty and they put their lives potentially on the line during that shift. Why are we doing things to create and to take that hazard and elevate and make it even more hazardous than it has to be? And essentially that's what we're doing here. We're creating a situation where we've got two agencies that are not communicating with respect to their response. They're not coordinating their response. Instead, they're just going to the call, and that creates a problem for not only the officers but also for the public.

In the case of this 911 hangup the other day, that officer responded I'm told from 45 and 142 and he responded what we refer to as 10-39. That's red lights and siren, and that would be appropriate for a 911 hangup because you don't know what happened that prompted that call.

Now, that's a long distance for somebody, especially for someone on a motorcycle, to be traveling red lights and siren. And there's always a certain level of hazard that comes into play when an officer is operating under emergency conditions like that being in a squad car, and I think even more so in the case of a motorcycle where there's less visibility.

So my question, and my point really is, is this really necessary, is it necessary to increase this hazard, increase it for the citizens, increase it for the officers who are responding. I really see no legitimate law enforcement purpose for this. Certainly not one that would outweigh the risks associated with it.

Another situation, you've got two officers responding to, for example, let's say a burglary and they're not coordinated, and the left hand doesn't know what the right hand is doing. The left hand may not know that the right hand is even going to be there. Now he's there and he's searching and he's walking around the property. All of a sudden here's the other officer there. How does he not know that the other officer is, in fact, not the possible offender here? Again, uncoordinated. Lack of communication. And this is what's been done in Pleasant Prairie. They've taken and they've placed these squads here, never told us about it, never informed us, and apparently direct them to go out and do things here. I'm not certain what exactly they were directed to do. I do know that, as Dave has stated earlier, they have been running radar and doing traffic stops. But when it comes down to doing more than that, to where they're going to be responding to calls, I have a real problem with that. I think that's potentially a hazard and I just don't see why we need to elevate the risk that's there every day anyway to a higher level. That's essentially what we're doing.

Sheriff Beth:

I'd like to address the coordination. I played for you the tape. The tape showed we did our best to coordinate. We called Pleasant Prairie. And what they failed to do is let us know that they arrived and let us know that everything was okay. That's what we do with every other agency within Kenosha County. If I didn't have the tape there would be some question here, but it was played for all of you and the coordination on our part exists. We do it with every other jurisdiction. We should have been notified, and I agree with Chief Wagner, in Pleasant Prairie that didn't exist but it didn't come on our part.

Mike Pollocoff:

Mr. President, I guess we're going around on this, but I want to draw some references that are kind of guiding what the Village has done. When the Village was a Township, at that point they decided that the law enforcement that was provided by the Sheriff at that time was not everything that they wanted and the Town created their own Town Police Department. Subsequently we have a Village Police Department. This Board, and I believe at the desires of the community because it's been an ongoing process, has staffed a police department of professional officers, 27 officers. We have a dispatch that operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week to provide police services to this community, and the Board has demanded a level of production and performance out of that department that they've obtained. As Chief Wagner indicated, his patrols and staffing is structured to be able to respond to an emergency call within three to four minutes. The

clearance rights to that department far exceed any department in the County. They're delivering the work product that this Board has demanded of them in the past.

The issue here is that when it comes down to it at some point, apparently on the 17th, the Sheriff changed policies, the Village didn't have knowledge of it, and what this Village needs to operate and what Chief Wagner needs from the Board or what the Board has budgeted him to do is provide that police service. And when citizens' calls for services are not being directed to the Village through 911, through the direct connect like it has been, what happens is you get a disconnect between what's happening. None of this would have happened had that call gone straight to Pleasant Prairie as it did before. If Pleasant Prairie wasn't able to respond they would have requested somebody.

Pleasant Prairie, though, if you're dealing with response time that's three minutes to four minutes, I'd venture to guess that would be pretty rare that the Sheriff or any other agency is going to be able to respond to a call within the Village that quickly. It only makes sense that the agency that's been funded and authorized by the Village of Pleasant Prairie to provide police service to the residences do that and do that in an unfettered manner.

Chief Wagner is a professional, as are his officers, command officers. If they need assistance they'll call for assistance. But I think that the Sheriff's process, and you look at the e-mails where you politely question people as to what agency they want that was not good policy. It was not thought out. It was not consulted with the Village, and I don't think it serves the public well.

If Sheriff Beth wants to be the chief officer of the Village of Pleasant Prairie there's a process for that to happen. He needs to make his proposal. He needs to make the proposal to take over the police department and provide services and do that. But to change operations of how people are receiving or getting their police service and then hang that on the fact that there's a tax equity study I think is a little disingenuous. The goal of his department and of Chief Wagner's department is to provide emergency police services to people as fast as possible. We designed a system where that happens. People call 911, that call comes straight to Pleasant Prairie. The Village's resources are allocated to handle that and if we need help we do that. And that's really where it happens. And for that process to change without any notice to the people involved it represents a problem and that's what gets us to this point tonight. It's not the tax equity study. It's not the fact that there's a proposal coming. None of that relates to any of that. If this hadn't have happened this weekend we wouldn't be here tonight.

With respect to who's here tonight from the press, every meeting that this Board has is publicly noticed to any media agency that's filed a request for us to notice it, and we notice this on a regular basis. Whether we're talking about a dog that peed on a sidewalk or we're talking about this. It doesn't matter what it is, everybody gets a notice and that doesn't change. That hasn't changed for years.

I think this is an important subject to resolve and there's a resolution for your consideration tonight. And I think if we move onto that it can be voted up or down, but I think the issues are really how the emergency services get to Pleasant Prairie. I've known Chief Wagner all my career here, and I knew his predecessor, Chief Horvath, and they are not shy about requesting help when they feel that they need it, that the citizens are going to need it and benefit from it and

they've done that no matter who it is. If someone's feelings are hurt because they didn't get asked, it wasn't because someone went wanting for services. Services were taken care of.

This Board has funded this police department to provide good services. It's excellent service. This police department can compare to any department in the State and they have compared well to any department in the State. But if you take away their ability to respond to calls and get that call and make that determination then it's helter-skelter. And I don't care if the taxpayers are paying for a County squad, the taxpayers pay for the State Patrol to be here. The taxpayers pay Racine through sales tax, they pay up there. It's got to be run through the responsible agency which is the Village Police Department. That's what this Board has determined.

If Sheriff Beth feels he's the main law enforcement officer in the Village, then if he wants to view it that way and operate it that way that's fine, but this Board has not budgeted this police department to do that. And you haven't budgeted this police department to kind of randomly take calls or share calls or split calls. You budgeted a department that's going to respond to calls as fast as possible within three to four minutes and solve the crimes that occur. You take care of the people that need to be taken care of, not do a do-si-do and decide who is going to come where or who is going to handle the call when they get there. That's not efficient police service. It's not a group effort or you get to a call and you take a vote as to who is going to take care of the call. You've got to get somebody there fast and you've got to take care of it.

This thing has got to go a series of steps. If we want to turn over this police department to the County, my recommendation is you take this proposal, you evaluate it and you go from there. If that's what we're going to do, that's what we're going to do. But we don't do it backwards where the Sheriff's Department starts taking calls randomly or we deal with those pieces and we pick them up as they go. That doesn't make sense. If we're going to deliver police service to this community it's got to be coordinated and it's got to be organized and there's got to be somebody responsible, not a group of people.

John Steinbrink:

Thank you, Mike. I've allowed people a lot of latitude here this evening. We're here for the main purpose of addressing the emergency response issue. People have thrown a lot of irons in the fire so far. I've allowed them to vent, and I think some of this has hopefully brought things out and hopefully cleared some of the air here. We've talked about AB 79. That's not why we're here tonight. We've talked about the Sheriff's sales pitch. That's why we're here tonight. We even touched on the lake tragedy where the Coast Guard was called rather than the Sheriff's Department, because when you're on a big lake who are you going to call to respond? They called the Coast Guard and that upsets a few people, maybe even the start of all this.

We talked about the tax equity study. That's been an ongoing thing but that's not why we're here tonight either. The main reason we're here is to protect the public and make sure the public is served the best way possible. We don't want to circumvent processes. We want to make sure a process is followed so that the best service is provided and the best response is provided and, as I said, the service to the citizens is the best possible and in the meantime protecting the officers of both departments. These are all professionals. They do a great job. We just make sure the process stays on track and everybody is served well.

With that, If there are no comments I will move onto Item B.

Alex Tiahnybok:

My next two comments are probably going to be a surprise to some people, but the 20 questions being asked when somebody calls 911, I'll tell you, if I was in my house and somebody was breaking down my door and they said do you want the Sheriff's Department or the Village of Pleasant Prairie or do you want the State Police I'd probably say are you kidding me? I'd say just send somebody, dammit, and fast. So I think with all due respect to Sheriff Beth I think that's not a good idea. And I don't see how that was ever a good idea.

When I campaigned for office one of the pledges I made was I think a lot of people feel as though there was an ivory tower mentality to the way things are done around here. There was an article, again referenced this evening, in the *Kenosha News* on Saturday and I was called and responded with some comments about my perspective. After I saw it printed I thought this is a perfect opportunity to exercise one of the things I promised to do. And over the course of the last roughly half a year or year I've been gathering e-mail addresses and trying to get a sense from the citizens of Pleasant Prairie for their willingness to participate in a rather than top down approach but a bottom up approach and actually being a representative rather than a guru.

I sent out an e-mail referencing that article in the *Kenosha News* on Saturday and I said give me some feedback. And amazingly--these were generally people that I thought would have been probably the taxpayer let's cut and slash perspective, but amazingly, and the e-mails are still coming in, it was overwhelmingly in favor of leave the Pleasant Prairie Police Department alone. If we're paying more than somewhere else in Kenosha County, maybe we're getting more.

I welcome Sheriff's Beth's proposal to hear what he's got to say. But I also will expect the same parameters, and I don't know what the metric to use to measure the value of service, whether it's man hours per dollar or vice versa or some kind of metric saying, okay, if Pleasant Prairie is prepared to spend more money on its police services and the taxpayers of Pleasant Prairie are prepared to pay those dollars, then we have the right to do it. And if it's at a higher cost overall than the same service that the Sheriff's Department would provide, again, I think that's our business. If people want that level of service it's going to be the Sheriff's Department to prove that they can provide the same level of service at a lower price. Then I could jump on that bandwagon.

But under no circumstances, especially after the deluge of e-mails that I got saying we have a responsive police force, they know the environment, they know the community, in many cases they know the citizens that are calling, I think that's valuable. Furthermore, Pleasant Prairie is a growing community, and I think there's a component of Village identity. If we took all the Pleasant Prairie squads off the street, then I think a part of Pleasant Prairie's identity would go away.

So, again, I promised from day one that I would make every decision on the basis of efficiency. There are a lot of factors involved in that. Again, I welcome Sheriff Beth's proposal, but it's going to have to come down to something that's black and white, no pun intended. But

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something that you can say here's option A and here's option B and these are now comparable apples and apples and which one is better? If the two things are apples and oranges and there are a lot of factors in there that you can't enumerate or put a number on, then I think we're going to have the same quagmire going on.

So I highly recommend and request that Sheriff Beth puts together a proposal that shows the proposal in that way. And likewise, since I think this is sort of unfortunately a turf battle, I'm going to expect the same thing from Chief Wagner to really understand what it's costing us per man hour on the street, per squad car, whatever kind of metric makes the most sense. But something that really gives us two comparable issues.

John Steinbrink:

. . . working on. One point to point out is you bring up the cost of service, Alex. I think the Village's cost of service per citizen, along with its clearance rate, is going to be pretty hard to match.

Alex Tiahnybok:

I hope that's the case.

John Steinbrink:

That's a fact and it's been presented in the Statewide publications as to what the costs are. But getting back to why we're here this evening, we'll move onto Item B.

b) Consider Resolution No. 05-49 authorizing action to correct 911 dispatch operations.

Mike Pollocoff:

Mr. President, want me to read the resolution?

John Steinbrink:

Sure.

Mike Pollocoff:

Whereas, the Village of Pleasant Prairie maintains a professional and full service Police Department for the public safety of the citizens of the Village; and,

Whereas, the Village of Pleasant Prairie also maintains a 24 hour 7 day a week emergency dispatch; and,

Whereas, Kenosha City/County Joint Services has historically directed all Police 911 calls directly to the Pleasant Prairie Police Department for dispatch; and,

Whereas, this method of service provides the Village residents with the fastest and most efficient delivery of police and public safety service; and,

Whereas, the Kenosha County Sheriff has unilaterally determined that residents of Pleasant Prairie must be quizzed to determine which police agency they want to come to their home when an emergency call is placed; and,

Whereas, such actions on the Sheriff's part jeopardizes the public safety, health and welfare of the citizens of the Village of Pleasant Prairie; and,

Whereas, the Kenosha County Sheriff has directed Sheriff squads within the Village with no coordination with the Village's Police Department providing a source of confusion as to what police agency provides direct services to the residents.

Now, therefore, be it resolved, as follows:

- 1) The Kenosha County Sheriff and Kenosha City/County Joint Services immediately cease and desist from soliciting residents what police agency will provide service to them.
- 2) Immediately transfer all 911 calls for police service directly to the Pleasant Prairie dispatch.
- 3) Coordinate all patrol within the corporate limits of the Village through the Village of Pleasant Prairie Police Department.
- 4) Shall not undertake any police work within the Village of Pleasant prairie without coordinating said activities with the Chief of Police.
- 5) If the Kenosha County Sheriff and Kenosha City/County Joint Services fails to comply with this resolution authorizing the Village Administrator to seek:
 - a. Legal assistance to initiate legal action against Kenosha County and Kenosha City/County Joint Services to correct the 911 dispatch problem.
 - b. Begin the process to have SBC 911 police calls directly sent to the Pleasant Prairie Dispatch.

Mike Serpe:

Mr. Chairman, I'd move to adopt Resolution 05-49.

Steve Kumorkiewicz:

Second.

John Steinbrink:

We have a motion and a second. Any further discussion on this item? Alex?

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Alex Tiahnybok:

What does directly transfer mean? Does that mean actually taking the call and forwarding it, or does it mean taking the content of the call and notifying?

Mike Pollocoff:

It means doing what they do now. They get the call and they directly--if it's not a medical call it goes directly to Pleasant Prairie.

Alex Tiahnybok:

So the person gets connect to Pleasant Prairie PD?

Mike Pollocoff:

Right.

Alex Tiahnybok:

The phone call, okay.

John Steinbrink:

Motion and a second. Any further comments or questions?

Jeff Lauer:

Just a question on one of the whereas. Such action on the Sheriff's part jeopardizes the public safety, health and welfare of the citizens of Pleasant Prairie. How does that jeopardize anything when we all heard the tape that Pleasant Prairie was contacted? How is that jeopardizing the health, welfare and safety? As Mike said the more red lights the better.

Mike Serpe:

I think you missed the--the 911 hangup call, Jeff, our dispatch center was notified. There was no notification I believe at the trailer park. Officer Prange is here and Chief Wagner indicated in his report there was no notification. One of our squad cars heard and monitored over his police radio that a Sheriff's squad was on the way, and he's the one that notified our dispatcher. That's not the way you do business. Nobody benefits by that.

John Steinbrink:

Further comments or questions?

Steve Kumorkiewicz:

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One last comment, Mr. President. I'm not aware of any problem with the Sheriff's Department for the last 17 years. We didn't have any problem with the Sheriff's Department for 17 years as far as I know. The Sheriff's serving notice from court and everything we never had any problem. I think the communication always was good until two weeks ago. That bothers me. Really I don't care if they come around here, but we had consideration between the two departments for 17 years that bothers me. It's accountability right here. The Sheriff is elected. The position is not. We can fire you anytime. We can do that with the Sheriff. It's a different . . . one is a political job and one is a . . . job. Thank you. No further comments.

John Steinbrink:

We have a question before us. Those in favor?

Voices:

Aye.

John Steinbrink:

Opposed?

Jeff Lauer:

No.

John Steinbrink:

Motion carries—

Alex Tiahnybok:

I abstain.

John Steinbrink:

I don't think you can do that.

Alex Tiahnybok:

Okay, then on the premise that communications are going to be improved and this may be a temporary thing anyway, if some aspect, some component of—

Mike Serpe:

Mike, can we get an explanation on the absentia?

John Steinbrink:

I'm going to call for a roll call vote.

SERPE MOVED TO ADOPT RESOLUTION 05-49 AUTHORIZING ACTION TO CORRECT 911 DISPATCH OPERATIONS; SECONDED BY KUMORKIEWICZ; ROLL CALL VOTE – STEINBRINK – YES; TIAHNYBOK – YES; KUMORKIEWICZ – YES; LAUER – NO; SERPE – YES; MOTION CARRIES 4-1 WITH LAUER DISSENTING ON AUTHORIZING ACTION TO CORRECT 911 DISPATCH OPERATIONS.

4. ADJOURNMENT

SERPE MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING; SECONDED BY KUMORKIEWICZ; MOTION CARRIED 5-0.