

[The following information, prepared by Dennis Klaila at PSC, responds to some of the points raised during the August 16, 2012 meeting of the Special Committee on 911 Communications]

1. Purchasing coordination. There is one example that I am aware of where counties have coordinated the purchase of PSAP equipment. Brown, Calumet, Outagamie, and Winnebago Counties agreed to purchase equipment together. The name of the consortium project is FoxComm. The counties found it was easier to provide back-up support for each other if they were all using the same equipment. They also receive a bit of a discount on purchases since they are placing larger orders. I have not been in contact with FoxComm since the wireless grant program ended, but I believe it is still in existence.
  
2. Police & Fire Protection Fee. The P&FP admin rule is attached. [This document is posted on the committee's website] Richard Tuma and other county committee members were unaware of this rule because they did not participate in the drafting of it. They dropped out after the focus of that effort shifted from 911 funding to deficit reduction. This rule was drafted by a joint team from PSC and DOR. The rule contains language and regulatory policies that you may find useful. The rule is working reasonably well, so I would think it would be preferable to borrow from this rule rather than start from scratch. The rule establishes a procedure for collection of the P&FP fee at the point of sale. I think you would see significant opposition from the pre-paid wireless industry if the legislature proposed a different carrier-based collection scheme. The retail vendors did not like this program at first, but as a group they seem to have accepted it as part of doing business.
  - The original goal was to collect \$50M per year, based upon 2008 subscription and sales numbers. The collection in 2010 was low, but the collection exceeded the \$50M target in both 2011 and 2012.
  
  - The rule defines who should pay the fee. Traditional landline, subscription wireless customers, and pre-paid wireless customers all pay the fee (there is a different rate and collection methodology for pre-paid wireless). The rule also includes IP-based communication. The rule follows the current federal approach – the rule includes Voice over IP customers, but excludes interactive non-voice internet communications (text messaging and internet gaming). The rule sets out a procedure for determining whether a sale of pre-paid minutes has a Wisconsin connection sufficient to trigger the application of the fee. This determination of a Wisconsin nexus is similar to the approach DOR has used for other taxes and fees.
  
  - Dep't of Revenue has developed two forms for the P&FP fee. The first form addresses the issue that a carrier that just resells another facilities-based carrier's wholesale wireless or local landline telecommunications service does not collect the P&FP fee. The second is a typical tax form that accompanies payment of the P&FP fee. You can see from Form PFP-100 that DOR collects both the \$.38 fee from retail vendors and the \$.75 fee from telecommunications carriers.

<http://www.revenue.wi.gov/forms/misc/pfp-211.pdf>

<http://www.revenue.wi.gov/forms/misc/pfp-100.pdf>

- Key Point: If the study committee were to recommend transforming the P&FP fee into a 911 surcharge, we may ask for the opportunity to tweak some of the statutory language authorizing the surcharge. The P&FP fee authorization in s. 196.025(6) contains a formula for calculating the fee for business customers with 10 or more service connections. In practice, this formula has proven to be problematic. I can provide more detail on this issue if needed, but the basic problem appears to be that this formula simply does not come close to capturing the variation and complexity of multi-line telephone service. DOR may also propose language to strengthen its audit authority with respect to the fee or surcharge.
3. Land Information and GIS. It would appear that upgrades to existing paper and electronic parcel maps are a key element to 911 center's call taking and response. The wireless 911 grant program funded two types of land information projects: 1) additions to existing parcel maps, and 2) orthophotography.
- Additions and upgrades to existing parcel maps. Prior to the wireless 911 program, every county had a base parcel map that it used for real estate, road planning, and other land use issues. The wireless 911 program funded additions to those maps to capture road centerlines, water boundaries, railroad right of ways and similar geographical features that had little relevance to real estate transactions, but were essential for 911. In a few cases, the wireless 911 program also funded in part the conversion of the parcel map from a paper to an electronic format.
  - Aerial photography. Most counties have a set of digital images taken from the air at low altitude covering all the land in the county. If the committee takes the tour of the Dane County 911 Center, it will see that for every 911 call the call taker has the ability to pull up an aerial photo that includes the caller's location. The caller's location is marked on the photo display. In some counties, there is also an electronic parcel map that can display the location of an emergency as well. These electronic displays are a significant improvement over the paper and file photo alternatives. The wireless 911 program funded a number of these projects at a 50% level of reimbursement. I think many of these photography projects had already been planned, but with the 50% funding from the 911 surcharge, these projects were then within reach of a county's budget, and a number of county photography projects were completed as part of the wireless 911 grant program.
  - Key point: If the study committee were to recommend a new 911 funding program, one issue the committee may wish to address is the relationship between the 911 funding and the retained fees from real estate transactions. A portion of the retained fees fund the county land information offices. There is the potential that the two funding sources could end up paying the county twice

for the same set of salary and project expenses. We avoided this with the wireless 911 grant program by treating the retained fees as a prior grant, but it would be beneficial if the statute addressed this overlap directly.