

**Cuyahoga Falls City Council**  
**Minutes of the Committee-of-the-Whole**  
**September 20, 2016**

**Members:** Mrs. Pyke, Chair  
Mr. Pallotta  
Mr. Rubino  
Ms. Nichols-Rhodes  
Mr. Miller  
Mr. James  
Mr. Iona  
Mr. Colavecchio  
Mrs. Klinger  
Mr. Iula

Mrs. Pyke called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. All members were present.

**Discussion:**

The Regional Dispatch Center Committee Members present were: Stow Mayor, Sara Kline; Cuyahoga Falls Mayor, Don Walters; Tallmadge Mayor, David Kline; Senior Administrator of the Summit County Emergency Management Agency, Valerie DeRose; Stow Dispatch Supervisor, Ginger Hatfield; Stow Fire Captain, Paul Amonett; Cuyahoga Falls Finance Director, Bryan Hoffman; Cuyahoga Falls Director of Information Services, John Konich; Cuyahoga Falls Law Director, Russell W. Balthis; Stow Law Director, Amber K. Zibritosky; Cuyahoga Falls Fire Chief, Paul Moledor; Cuyahoga Falls Police Chief, Jack Davis; Stow Police Chief, Jeff Film; Cuyahoga Falls Assistant Fire Chief, Fred Jackson and other Administrative and Technical Members that did not speak.

Mayor Sara Kline welcomed everyone to Stow City Hall. She thanked everyone for coming this evening. If people were visitors, she wanted them to know that they were welcome. The purpose of tonight is to talk about a possible proposal to form a regional cooperative dispatch center. That is something that Stow, Cuyahoga Falls and Tallmadge have been discussing for a very long time. In past years, there have been several iterations of discussions on the possibility of forming a regional dispatch. The timing wasn't right, so it didn't come to fruition; however, they believe now is the time to put their resources together to form a cooperative dispatch center to benefit their mutual cities, citizens and first responders. One of the things that is evident is that dispatch is an essential service to all communities. It is imperative that all people who were impacted, whether they be residents, businesses, visitors or first responders, have a reliable, quality and responsive dispatch center. There aren't any functions of local government that are more critical than dispatch, because without dispatch, their fire and police departments couldn't function effectively. They needed to find the most cost-effective and efficient ways to solve the costs that are rising, staffing mandates and meet the level of service that all the stakeholders have come to expect and rightfully deserve.

Mayor Sara Drew turned the meeting over to Cuyahoga Falls Mayor Don Walters. Mayor Walters thanked everyone for meeting here this evening. They have been discussing this for about a year. This evening, they will cover why they felt the time is right to do this with the large investments that they have to make respectively and they would rather do together. Currently, both Stow and Cuyahoga Falls operate their own separate dispatch centers; Cuyahoga Falls' center being in their

**Committee-of-the-Whole**  
**September 20, 2016 – Page 2**

newest station, Fire Station No. 5, and Stow's center being next door, at the Safety Center. Neither of those locations could combine and allow for any growth, so they had to look for a neutral location where they could all come together. Right now, Stow handles about 62,000, and they dispatch for the City of Tallmadge, Village of Mogadore and Randolph Township Fire Department; Cuyahoga Falls handles about 56,500 and they dispatch for the City of Munroe Falls and the Village of Silver Lake in addition to their city. Combined, the two will have roughly 26 employees (15 from Stow and 11 from Cuyahoga Falls). That could change by one or two in the near future. When you combine dispatch centers, it will allow a lot of things. Down the road, it will allow efficiency in staffing. More importantly, they had had some crises where they had to assemble at their dispatch center. One is the flood in 2014. At any given time, they have a minimum of two employees working the dispatch center. If they are combined, they are looking at probably four or five to handle that crisis if need be. They hope that never happens, but they will have the capability of more employees to be there onsite at any given time, instead of being at separate locations.

Mrs. Hatfield stated she is currently the Dispatch Supervisor for Stow. She also participated in a lot of committees and is involved in a lot of the things in the county that have to do with 911. As many of them know, they, as Summit County, are under some state mandates for PSAPs. PSAPs are Public Safety Answering Points. Stow is a PSAP and Cuyahoga Falls is a PSAP. ORC 128.571 mandates that each county is limited in the number of wireless 911 answering PSAPs that may be funded from the 911 Local Government Assistance Fund. So, right now, Stow and Cuyahoga Falls each receive money monthly based on cell phone billings. It amounts to anywhere from \$5,000 to \$10,000 per month. Summit County is currently allowed to fund five wireless answering PSAPs. Those are currently Akron, the Summit County Sheriff's Office, Swisscom (which is Copley, Barberton and Norton), Stow and Cuyahoga Falls. In the future, with Stow and Cuyahoga Falls sitting right next to each other, they are probably not going to each maintain that funding. On January 1, 2018, that law stipulates that they may only fund four wireless answering PSAPs. Logically, either Stow or Cuyahoga Falls is going to lose the money if they don't combine. The Legislators have formed a Steering Committee which has been established to make recommendations for consolidation of PSAPs. It is supposed to accelerate the reduction in the number of PSAPs eligible for funding and accommodate Next-Gen 911 technology.

They have also been working on the PSAP's Operation Rules, which they had recently passed. Everybody must be compliant by May 12, 2018. Some things that go along with these PSAP Operation Rules are minimum staffing, training and technology requirements. The Legislators had good intentions when they are passing these laws. They want every resident to get the same level of care and service across the state. They don't want a smaller PSAP to deliver less care than a larger one. If they were to consolidate Stow and Cuyahoga Falls, they could meet that January 1, 2018, deadline of getting down to four wireless answering PSAPs. The cost of needed upgrades for dispatch radio consoles, 911 telephony software and CAD have escalated to a point where joint costs will be more economical. They are all faced with software and hardware that is nearing their life expectancy. The question is do they replace them separately or do they replace them together.

Ms. DeRose stated she is with Summit County Emergency Management. Her role is on the 911 Coordinators, so she is not affiliated with any communications center. She just wanted to give them a brief background on how Public Safety Answering Points have come about in Summit County. Back in May of 1988, they had 18 primary Public Safety Answering Points and 3

**Committee-of-the-Whole**  
**September 20, 2016 – Page 3**

secondary. Now, they are down to 12. The State Legislators had the best in mind for the public, but they didn't understand how dispatch works. To them, they see consolidated dispatch and they are pushing for that. So, the dispatchers are charged to do more with less. They see the funding changing. They see the requirements changing. They see the technology changing. However, they didn't see anything slowing down in the centers. They knew that the Legislators, maybe in a year or two, will be pushing them even more to consolidate. Because of the size of Summit County, they are allowed to have five Public Safety Answering Points that receive funding. In a year and a half, they will be allowed to have four Public Safety Answering Points that receive funding. Two years after that, they don't know what they are going to be able to receive. The bottom line is now is the time for everyone to make their own destiny and be proactive instead of waiting to be forced into something.

Captain Amonett stated he is with the Stow Fire Department. They are going to talk briefly about how the system works and how they got here. There are two things they are going to hear consistently through this process. One is cost savings, or, if not cost savings, a better use of money as far as getting better service or better product to the consumer who called 911, or that when they are building and when they are buying, bigger is better. Mrs. Hatfield had talked about the cost of these things being so expensive that there is an economy of scale with the money. The other thing is time constraints. They have had some constraints put on them timewise that are kind of out of their control, but drive them towards doing this now versus doing it five years, eight years or ten years from now. A dispatch system, Stow's personnel and Cuyahoga Falls' personnel, is essentially made-up of three specific pieces of equipment. They have a radio system, a CAD computer dispatch computer system and a phone system. Some of these upgrades are coming up right now, which is what makes this the time to do this. The radio system is currently reaching an end-of-service life. Motorola is here and they can answer any questions about that. Ultimately, where the radio system is, they are being driven to upgrade. This upgrade is a much more robust, much more sophisticated and much safer system for public safety. On the other hand, they are making this move in the 2016, 2017 and the outside 2018 timeframe, and they must do it or the radios won't work. They are making that move. So, one would argue that if Stow is going to do this and if the Falls must do this, since they are in the exact same position as Stow is, then if they are going to make this move, it made sense to do it one time, set this equipment up and move it, versus having to move it or trying to orchestrate this in two separate operations. So, there is some value in doing this on a schedule if they could accommodate that.

The replacement cost of this equipment is the same if they do it separately or they do it the same time. As an example, for the radio system, they are going to pay either way as far as Cuyahoga Falls and Stow went. There is a cost involved in maintaining a dispatch system. Stow had managed to pull off a significant and unique economical upgrade with community dispatch or the software that drives CAD, their system. They were here last year and had spoken with City Council. They were able to do that through Kent State University. They helped them put together a much more economical package at a significant cost savings. They would like to explore, in this joint dispatch center, doing that across the board; otherwise, at some point, their partners in Cuyahoga Falls are looking at a very expensive CAD upgrade. It is a very pricey piece of software to purchase. The phone equipment is probably the easiest one to explain. At some point, both Cuyahoga Falls and Stow must purchase a phone system. If they buy one phone system, it is less costly than buying two. There is a direct cost savings there as far as their capital output. The radio upgrades, they are going to do either way. They are either going to do them collectively or individually, but, either

**Committee-of-the-Whole**  
**September 20, 2016 – Page 4**

way, they are going to buy that equipment. He said he would much rather buy it, move it into the new facility with a clean cut-over with training and no loss of service to anyone's residence, versus trying to do this in their existing radio rooms. There is a clear cost savings with the CAD model that they use and a clear cost savings in not buying duplicate phone equipment. Ultimately, as Ms. DeRose had stated concerning State and PSAP money, not only does the money go away, but, at some point, the State, who wants to drive this consolidation, will find other means to drive the consolidation. If money isn't enough motivation, the State will find some other way to drive Stow and Cuyahoga Falls towards consolidating. They are right next door to each other. If they were going to consolidate, it is the two of them. It needs to be on some timeframe when they could do this around the phone and radio upgrades.

Mayor Sara Kline stated that to reiterate what Captain Amonett, Ms. DeRose and Mrs. Hatfield had already touched on some of the cost savings and cost sharing that they were looking at were driven by ongoing operational efficiencies, if they combine, and initial capital savings, using as an example what Captain Amonett just said about the phone systems, and, also, cost avoidance for all parties. Whether you have a contract, like Tallmadge does with Stow, or whether you are a primary PSAP, like Stow and Cuyahoga Falls, they all have costs and they all would like to not only be efficient with the money they must spend, but have as much cost avoidance in the future as they can. The other item that they wanted to drive home to the public and to everyone here is dollars and cents are very important in this equation. Certainly, they are a large factor in the decision-making process; however, at the end of the day, when someone relies on 911 because he is a person having a medical emergency, he is a person that needs the aid of the police department, or he is a first responder in the field who relies on dispatch as his lifeline to safety, it is imperative and it is critical that they have a high-quality, responsive dispatch center to address all those needs. She could guarantee that, right now, in Cuyahoga Falls and in Stow, they have those kind of dispatch centers. If they are unable to control their own destiny and are forced to make decisions that perhaps they don't want to, they may find themselves receiving dispatch services, as a community, from dispatch centers that are not where they want to be. That is very important. She, Mayor Walters and Mayor David Kline have talked about that for a long time. An important piece of this is to be able to control their own destiny going back to the critical importance of dispatch.

Mr. Russ Balthis stated he is the Law Director for the City of Cuyahoga Falls. He was asked to talk a little bit about if they decided to go forward with this, how will they structure it legally. He and Mrs. Zibritosky had talked about that at length. There are two ways they could look at it. One option is one that they currently use and they are all very familiar with is service contracts. That is currently how the City of Stow dispatches for the City of Tallmadge. Stow operates a dispatch center and Tallmadge has a contract with the City of Stow for dispatch services. The City of Cuyahoga Falls does the exact same thing for the City of Munroe Falls and the Village of Silver Lake. Another option is what they called a Council of Governments. That is the option that he and Mrs. Zibritosky would recommend for the group. It is established by the Ohio Revised Code. There is process that each community would have to go through to create this separate political entity. It is something that a lot of the communities that have created dispatch centers in Northeastern Ohio and around the state have used. A working group has met with the Red Center and Swisscom to talk about it. When considering why they would want to go with a COG over a service contract, there were a few big factors that they looked at. First, with a COG, they feel that that is a better position to spread out liability between the communities to where, if you have one city that is providing the services in the contract, it is a little bit harder to gauge liability. With a

**Committee-of-the-Whole**  
**September 20, 2016 – Page 5**

COG, it is more evenly split. They also feel that a COG works better for potential growth to other communities, as opposed to trying to work with one municipality in a contract relationship. Probably the best thing about a COG is that it would form a Council of Governments, which would have a representative, say the Mayor of Cuyahoga Falls, the Mayor of Stow and the Mayor of Tallmadge, and it provides stability. That is the entity that would govern the COG. If one mayor were to change because of term limits, or whatever, the COG, itself, would stay predominantly the same. There wouldn't be a complete change that they would go through in the case of a service contract. They would be happy to answer more questions as they moved on about this, but Mrs. Zibritosky is going to talk a little bit about how a COG is formed and then labor implications with their employees.

Mrs. Zibritosky stated she is the Law Director for the City of Stow. When it comes to forming the COG, each member would form an agreement that would establish the COG, talk about how the membership would be represented and talk about the purpose of the COG. From there, once the COG is formed, the COG would then establish its own bylaws. The bylaws would do things like discuss how the governing procedure would work and how each entity may withdraw, because, once they created the COG, they don't have to be part of it forever if it's not working. So, it would create a withdrawal process. It would also create a membership process; how they might add in new members. It would also appoint a fiscal officer and designate how the officers are going to be selected and how to amend the bylaws. Another important thing that the bylaws would eventually do is set up a schedule of fees and dues. It would at least create a formula for how to do that; then, once the COG operates, it would create its own schedule and that would be what each member would pay into the COG. Of course, the COG would also have to make an annual report to each city and each city council of all its activities of that year, so each city and each member would be fully kept apprised of what the COG is doing. Some important points that she wanted to make sure everybody knew in terms of councils, because they had each city council here, is the formation agreements would have to go through each member's councils. So, nothing could be done without it going through the Councils first. Another point is, before any money is appropriated to the COG, each member had the option to donate money, services and/or pay the schedule of dues. That appropriation would have to go through the members' councils. Also, the Cities would have to individually, whether they are a member city or they contract with other cities, which is also an option, that City Council would have to approve any contracting for dispatching services with the COG. Then, of course, if a member wanted to withdraw from the COG, that City Council would have to approve that withdrawal process. So, there are several different touchpoints overall that would involve each member's councils and the whole cities, but, essentially, a COG would still be its own separate entity, would create its own bylaws, would create its own governance of its own employees and all of that.

Then they had the labor matters. As a separate entity, it would be a separate employer. What does that mean for them? Specifically, for Stow and Cuyahoga Falls, they each have separate dispatching employees. They each have separate contracts with their bargaining units. Those contracts would cease to exist once they formed the COG and moved. They would then be employed by the COG. How does that work? They would essentially terminate the existing contracts and then, once the employees are employed by the COG, the dispatchers could then determine if they wanted to organize. If they did, they would have to follow all the procedures with the State's Employment Relations Board and then, once all that is completed, they would essentially bargain with the COG. They would then have a separate bargaining agreement that

**Committee-of-the-Whole**  
**September 20, 2016 – Page 6**

would be between the COG, as the employer, and the new dispatching entity. Ultimately, there would be some changes; however, it would be similar in the sense that they would still have dispatching employees that are most likely represented by a labor union.

Mayor Sara Kline stated one thing she wanted to make crystal clear to everyone in the room and everyone who may be listening at home is that she and Mayor Walters are committed and have pledged that if you have a job in the dispatch center today in Stow or Cuyahoga Falls and want a job in the dispatch center that may be formed under a COG, you will have that job. She wanted to be very clear that they have high-quality dispatchers and they needed those dispatchers to run a potential combined dispatch center. She recognized that there may be people who are close to retirement or, for whatever reason, may choose not to seek employment with the new entity should it be formed, but she and Mayor Walters wanted to make sure that there is no misunderstanding about the fact that if you have a job today, in Stow or Cuyahoga Falls, as a dispatcher, you will have a job, if you want it, in the new dispatch center that may be formed under the COG. She knew there are a lot of dispatchers here with their families. She just wanted to make sure that they knew that that is very important to her, Mayor Walters and Mayor David Kline.

Mr. Hoffman, the City of Cuyahoga Falls' Finance Director, stated this is all great, but you need a place to come to work and you need a place to dispatch from. He has been intimately involved in the process. It is a process, because both Stow and Cuyahoga Falls operate a dispatch center. They currently have roughly five consoles each. He knew that their dispatch center in Cuyahoga Falls is new in the Fire Department, and they had capability to expand in that dispatch center. The first step to their process is looking at if they could do this within the two dispatch centers that they currently operate. The dispatch center in Cuyahoga Falls could go up to about 10 potential consoles. Stow's dispatch center could house just about the same number. When they started looking at that and looking at a COG, or the opportunity to expand, because they felt this would be a very regional-type dispatch operation, they felt that even 10 consoles may not be enough. They needed the room to expand even further than 10 consoles, so they started looking for a separate location. They started looking for a place that they would be in a central location and easily accessible from a variety of different places within Summit County. They started with three separate buildings using that type of criteria. One is the Stow Board of Education's property, one is the NEONet building on Graham Road and the last one is Summit County Health Department's building. Those are the three buildings that they thought could house this regional dispatch center. They toured all three. The Stow Board of Education's property was tossed out quickly. It just didn't have what they are looking for. However, the NEONet and the Summit County Health Department's buildings had close connectivity to their fiber optics, are central locations between Cuyahoga Falls and Stow and had what they needed to build a regional dispatch center.

They asked Motorola to look at both those locations. Once they got into the Summit County Health Department's building, they noticed that the cost would be quite a bit less with that building, mostly due to walls, office space and those types of things that are already built into that building. Plus, they liked the location because it is right next to State Route 8 and is easily accessible from a variety of places, because if they expand, they want accessibility from State Route 8. Therefore, they focused in on that building. After they began to look at that building, they began to engage the Summit County Health Department in terms of a lease agreement. They have a very rough draft right now. There are still some terms to be worked out; however, what they liked about the Summit County Health Department is they are another government entity that has been open to

**Committee-of-the-Whole**  
**September 20, 2016 – Page 7**

them going into that facility. Their Board has been very flexible in wanting them to be there, and they only wanted to cover their costs in that building, which is providing them a very low-cost option to house the dispatch center. Because this is going to be a long-term dispatch center, when they asked what would happen if they are ever able to sell the building, they are very open and said that they would be able to offer it to them first. So, the selection process for the Health Department's building is the best option available to move a dispatch center into. Mr. Hoffman had passed out a diagram of the potential layout of the Health Department's building (a copy of which is attached to these minutes). They could easily fit 16 consoles into that dispatch center for expansion in the future.

Mrs. Zibritosky stated that they have talked about the formation of the agreement. Each member's council is going to have to pass legislation forming the COG and then become members. She believed that their timeframe is to get the COG established by the end of the year. From there, they would go forward and create the bylaws, and the governing body would then be able to do some of the things that they had to do regarding possibly contracting with the Summit County Health District for a location, trying to secure of a lot of the purchasing agreements for the equipment that is needed and, of course, bring forth appropriation legislation and a schedule of fees for what each council and each member city would have to do from there. The first goal they have is to create the COG by the end of the year. She didn't know all the deadlines that they had to meet in the law, but she knew that, by 2018, there is a lot that they must accomplish. From there, they are going to have to move quickly on creating the bylaws and getting the funding that they needed.

Mayor David Kline, from the City of Tallmadge, wanted to thank the Councils. It is an historic event to have all three Councils in one room to talk about such an important thing, the best thing that they could provide to their residents. He has been working for the City of Tallmadge for 38 years, so he knew what they are going through. He could truly tell them that merging dispatch centers works. The City of Tallmadge, in 2008, went through the process of whether should they join a COG with Stow and all the surrounding communities or should they go under contract. At that time, they elected to go with a contract. He could truly say that Tallmadge has not skipped a beat. Yes, it was scary. He had police departments and dispatchers there. He was the Service Director at that time. There were ads in the Tallmadge Express and in the Stow Sentry saying that the world was going to fall apart. He is happy to say that they are here today to say that Tallmadge Dispatch is not falling apart. They have excellent dispatchers. A lot of their dispatchers from Tallmadge are still with Stow. It works. It is very good for the communities. Now is the perfect time. When they did it in 2008, it was very difficult because they aren't talking much about COGs, joining dispatch centers and things like that. Collaboration was just starting. This is a perfect opportunity. They were mandated to do something. Tallmadge Council has a unique opportunity. Do they sit back and just be a contractor, or do they want to be a piece of it and join the COG? He thought the COG, from his aspect, for their safety forces and for their residents, is the best way to go. He wanted the 18,000 people in Tallmadge to have the confidence that they are here for the betterment of all, not only Tallmadge, but Stow, Cuyahoga Falls, Mogadore, Munroe Falls and Silver Lake. It isn't just the three entities who are here, it is a much larger picture. It is going to happen. Together, they will be stronger and better. If anybody would like to see the potential new dispatch center, the Summit County Health Department's facility on Graham Road, there is going to be an Open House on September 27, 2016, from 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. He invited anyone interested in touring the facility to do so at that time.

**Committee-of-the-Whole**  
**September 20, 2016 – Page 8**

Mayor Walters stated that the Cuyahoga Falls and Stow Dispatchers are very respected in Summit County. Upon hearing rumblings of what they are looking to do, they have been getting calls from other mayors and other entities. On hearing rumblings of what they are looking to do, that want to already join in. It is all about regionalization, where they could share resources and spread that cost out, because they want to provide the best service at the lowest cost. Mayors and other entities who are interested in hearing what they are doing have been calling both him and Mayor Sara Kline. So, this could be bigger than what they are talking about tonight. Bigger isn't always better, but bigger usually equates to more savings, because you spread out that cost. The only reason that is is because there are 12 dispatch centers currently in the County. Cuyahoga Falls and Stow are very well respected. Tallmadge is in with Stow. So, that is why people would gravitate towards this COG if it is formed, because of the professional work that they do. He just wanted people to know that there is a lot of interest outside of just who is in this room.

Mayor Sara Kline stated that all the members of the respective Administrations represented wanted to say thank you to all of them for their time and attention. She always said that dispatch is one of the things that she truly never thought she would need to know anything about in her life; however, in the past several years, she has learned more about dispatch than she had ever could have imagined. She is sure many of them felt like they had gotten a crash course this evening in all things dispatch. The bottom line is if this is an idea that you agree is worthy of pursuit, they need your assistance, cooperation and legislative approval. This truly is, as Mayor Walters and Mayor David Kline had talked about earlier, about all our communities. It is about our residents, our visitors, our businesses and our first responders. They need them to participate in this with them and they need them to go on this dispatch journey with them and be full a partner in this process. They are going to open the meeting for questions and discussions. She knew Mr. Rasor had a plan on how he is going to do that with the City Councils. After they are done with questions and discussion from City Council members, there would be an opportunity for questions and comments from the audience. Ms. Berkey would be walking around with a microphone when they got to the public comment time. If people are interested in asking a question or making a comment during that time, they should please raise their hand, and Ms. Berkey would come around with a microphone. Mayor Sara Kline turned the meeting over to Stow Council President Rasor.

Mr. Rasor stated that he liked baseball analogies, so he is going to put it this way: They are going to do two innings. Stow would bat last as the home team, but they would give each Council two chances to ask questions, because he is sure people would think of other things after hearing some of the questions. Mr. Rasor turned the meeting over to President of Tallmadge City Council, Mr. Donovan, to allow him to call on members of his Council to ask questions. He thought there are enough microphones they could pass around to hopefully get everyone's questions answered. Mr. Donovan wanted to echo what Mayor David Kline had said. Their process of going through and having Stow handle their dispatch was seamless. There was a lot of discussion and a lot of fear, but it all went smoothly.

(Due to a microphone malfunction, some of Ms. Ray's and Mr. Rensel's comments were inaudible.)

Ms. Ray, Tallmadge City Councilwoman At-Large, applauded the Committee for the work they had done. The City Council people, at least in the City of Tallmadge, knew that regionalization works, because it does work for Tallmadge. Even though they are going down to four centers that would be funded, and, eventually, in the future, there could be three centers, she asked if they had

**Committee-of-the-Whole**  
**September 20, 2016 – Page 9**

explored the idea of forming a county-wide dispatch center, including the Summit County Sheriff's Department and the City of Akron. Mayor Sara Kline stated she would start and then Mrs. DeRose could jump in. To answer Ms. Ray's question, they had had conversations with several entities. They also have some upcoming meetings. She and Mayor Walters have a meeting next week with some county officials; however, at this point in time, for a variety of reasons related to scale and quality of service, they are focusing on northern Summit County with the potential for, based on the outcome of their conversation with county officials, maybe a county agency that might be interested. So, her answer is directly, no, they haven't explored the idea of a full county-wide dispatch center, but they are certainly making every effort to make it as broad as they could make it and still be manageable and maintain the level of service that they currently had. Ms. DeRose just wanted to add that, several years ago, they had hosted Summit on Dispatch where they talked about the new radio system, how they all went to the 800 trunking and the future of 911. So, the answer is yes, the County has always looked at that. Executive Pry was very proactive. They are now updating Executive Shapiro. She couldn't speak for any of the 31 individual political subdivisions, but there have always been ongoing conversations. So, she would say, yes, the door is always open and they all want to work with their partners.

Ms. Ray stated while she appreciated them providing them with proposed capital costs, she noticed that there are no costs in there for people. She would appreciate being provided more details. Mr. Hoffman stated, concerning the cost, that provided on the sheet he had passed out, the \$1,490,000 number is an actual quote from Motorola. They could provide that quote to them. What he had wanted to show in the capital costs structure is what both dispatch centers are facing in total costs if they did nothing and maintained dispatch centers exactly the way that the operations are currently running today; then he wanted to kind of contrast that with capital costs if they are to combine and put a joint dispatch center together. Captain Amonett had mentioned that Stow has taken one step towards regionalization, and that was moving to the Kent State University's system for CAD, which was a cost savings in and of itself. They are hoping that Cuyahoga Falls could do something very similar to that. They have had some preliminary discussions and are open to that. He thought that would work quite well. As costs come to light and as they move forward on this, they would be happy to continually update the Councils.

Ms. Ray stated that her final question is regarding the forming of the COG, how would those costs be allocated, and as more members come into the COG, how would they be a part and would any money be rebated to the original members of the COG. Mayor Sara Kline stated there are two components to this. One would be an original capital buy-in, if that is the right term, for founding members of the COG. That is likely going to be a formula based on population, as well as percentage of share. A combination of those two seems to be the fairest way to do it. So, for example if, down the road, if Hudson were to join two years from now and they are to come in as a capital buy-in, then the plan would be to amortize the capital costs that they have already spent, minus, obviously, two years of depreciation, and then rebate or somehow reallocate those back into their ongoing operating costs. Bear in mind she is not a finance director, so she is sure she is using incorrect terminology to some degree, but to make a long story short, the more partners they can bring in, the lower each founding member's capital costs will be. For ongoing operational costs, that is going to likely be a formula between call volume and population. The challenge with simply doing calls for service is not all calls for service are the same. Different communities have different kinds of calls for service. For example, Cuyahoga Falls runs its own utility company. The City of Stow does not. Their dispatch center handles calls for utilities. Stow does not. So, it

**Committee-of-the-Whole**  
**September 20, 2016 – Page 10**

is not apples to apples to simply do it on calls for service. As they have talked through this, it is their belief that if this is formed, larger entities, like Stow, Cuyahoga Falls, Tallmadge, maybe Hudson and places like that, would want to be full-voting partners. Smaller entities that join may only want to be contractual members. She would anticipate that it would be a slightly higher per-call cost if you are simply a service member or a contracted agency, as opposed to someone who has an investment in the capital side. Mr. Balthis stated he did want to note that the fee structure would be something that would be approved by the COG. That would be the Board. So, whoever the members of the COG's Board are, whether it be the two Mayor Klines and Mayor Walters, they would have to vote and approve what that would be. Then that offer would go to the cities and the cities would have to accept it, much like how Tallmadge would negotiate with Stow today on their costs and services and the same way that Cuyahoga Falls negotiates with Silver Lake and Munroe Falls.

Mr. Rensel, Tallmadge City Councilman At-Large, stated they have been talking a lot of cost savings in a COG. Ultimately, they are responsible to the people who elected them. They aren't concerned as much about cost savings up front as they are about efficiency of services. This came up when they are working with Stow in 2008. What is going to happen to response times? What does this entity have as a measuring board to provide and ensure Tallmadge residents that services would remain the high quality that has been stated? Mayor David Kline stated Mr. Rensel asked a great question. Their number-one priority is to provide the service to their residents. They had been fortunate to do that with a good contract with the City of Stow. As a COG member, he thought their safety forces would have that team. They said the Mayors would be the COG persons; however, he would be assigning his safety forces to be the oversight of that. They would guarantee that if there is a problem or anything going on, they would track it, fix it and keep that under control, just like they had done in the past with the City of Stow. They had a great working relationship. If there is a problem, the Chiefs get together. They have an oversight committee. They look at it, figure it out, come up with an action plan and then, through the help of Stow, they fix it. People can rest assured that, as long as he is around, the other Mayors or even the Councils, the number-one priority is to provide the number-one quality dispatch center in the area. Forget the cost. It is about quality. Mr. Rensel thought they had done that. He is only asking about Tallmadge's potential with the COG, that they come up with a unified system. He wants see that Tallmadge is the same as Stow or Cuyahoga Falls. He is sure the people in Mogadore would like to see the same.

Mr. Sisak, Ward 1 Tallmadge City Council, stated he had a couple of technical questions. Recently, in Tallmadge, they had upgraded their radios to P25 compatibility. He asked what the Cities of Stow and Cuyahoga Falls are running their systems on at their dispatch centers. Captain Amonett stated they used the exact same radio system. The City of Tallmadge is ahead of them on the upgrade. Captain Amonett stated Stow is not done internally. It is pre-25. It is what Motorola calls subscriber units. The portable and mobile radios that are in the field have not been upgraded at this point. That is in the works to be done at some point. Mr. Sisak asked if that would be a cost strictly to the City of Stow and their safety forces. Captain Amonett stated that subscriber units are individually the responsibility of the communities or departments and out of their budgets. Mr. Sisak asked about Cuyahoga Falls. Mr. Konich, the Director of Information Services for the City of Cuyahoga Falls, stated they are currently P25 compatible on all their subscriber units. All the consoles need to be upgraded by the middle of 2017. Those are where it is going to force them to have to use the P25-compatible subscriber units. Mr. Sisak stated, as far

**Committee-of-the-Whole**  
**September 20, 2016 – Page 11**

as efficiency, he thought of the radio system as a redundancy. He asked where would the powers be, what is the circumference, what is their diameter as far as coverage, whether it is located at the Summit County Health Department's building or somewhere else within the region. He asked if there would be repeater towers and they continue to have some shared radio channel.

Captain Amonett stated Mr. Sisak's question essentially is what is the radio infrastructure. Essentially, when the P25 upgrade that they are talking about is completed, the console purchase, dispatching equipment as well as subscriber units, it is an IP-based system, so they can plug and play it through fiber optics at any number of locations. He was working today at Stow Fire on a five-tower site, countywide radio system. On the backside of the P25 upgrade, they would be in 10 sites. The hilt would be tied-in fiber optic-wise thru NEONet, which he believed is the current plan. Ultimately, they are adding one of those 10 sites right here on this campus at the Stow water tower. So, the IP tie-in will be from the Health Department's building, through this water tower. As part of a cost-sharing agreement, the County of Summit has agreed to let them use their equipment on that water tower free of charge to make that tie-in. Mr. Sisak asked if what Captain Amonett is telling him is there is no consideration with the distance. Captain Amonett stated, no, there is no discernable change from the Health Department's building to Cuyahoga Falls' dispatch center to where Stow's is now. On the dispatch end, they both transmit and receive via that fiber optic cable. They don't communicate on a two-way radio any more. They talk into a Dell computer; it processes it digitally and puts it out over the antennas. So, theoretically, from an IP standpoint, any hardened facility that they are happy with for the dispatch center they could communicate out of. Mr. Konich stated, for Cuyahoga Falls, another advantage of doing this merger is that they currently have a tower that they communicate with on Portage Trail, across from Bolich Middle School. Now that Stow is putting their infrastructure in, that is going to give them redundancy that they had never had before. That is the advantage of doing a merger; they get to share all their toys.

Mr. Donovan stated he had a question regarding backup. He asked what the failsafe is to the center going down, who would take those calls and where would they be shifted to that could cover an area this big in the event of some catastrophe. Ms. DeRose stated to answer the question Mr. Donovan had asked concerning service and quality of service requiring a continuity of operations or COOP planning, they always say, right, now, their 911 System in Summit County is transparent because, occasionally, they do have a hiccup with their telephone company and a 911 line will go down. The public doesn't know that. The dispatchers do, and they can automatically route it to any other Public Safety Answering Point. The one thing that they must consider when and if this goes through is what Public Safety Answering Point is robust enough to handle another community's calls. That is all mandated in the new requirements; the continuity of operations, the standard of service and the level of training. So, in 2018, those requirements are already in place. Cuyahoga Falls and Stow, right now, do have that redundancy built in and they do have alternate PSAP centers, so it would be no different. Mr. Donovan stated that he understood the function of that, but where or who? He guessed there isn't an answer to it quite yet. Captain Amonett stated, ultimately, when the COG gets formed and this is built, they would reach an agreement with one of their sister dispatch agencies, most likely one of the suburban agencies. In all reality, the City of Akron's Dispatch Center answers roughly 50% of the 911 calls in Summit County. So, they would look for a neighbor who is willing to do that, as they would for them, the Swisscom Center or one of the other centers here in Summit County, so there is some redundancy; however, the

**Committee-of-the-Whole**  
**September 20, 2016 – Page 12**

COG would decide, with Ms. DeRose's help, on what is the best location to answer the calls when they are down.

Mr. Rasor handed over the meeting to President Mary Ellen Pyke of Cuyahoga Falls City Council. Ms. Pyke stated that Ms. DeRose talked about competing in the County for funding. She asked how many consolidated dispatch centers they have currently. Ms. DeRose stated she didn't know if they would call them consolidated, but Swisscom, which is Copley, Norton and Barberton, was a COG; then they have 12 other communication centers that answer for other communities. The Summit County Sheriff's Office has service contracts in place, Twinsburg has service contracts in place and Macedonia has service contracts in place. They are more of service contracts and other agencies are contracting with them. The Sheriff's Office also dispatches for the Metro Parks. Then they have the City of New Franklyn, which dispatches for themselves and Clinton. So, they are kind of piecemealed around. She could provide them with a sheet that articulates who does what for whom. Ms. Pyke requested that Ms. DeRose do that. She asked Ms. DeRose to include in that how many residents those different entities are serving. Ms. Pyke stated that any time they join services like this, everyone is worried about the staff and what is going to happen to them. She is assuming the continuity in their health coverage would continue, but how would they look at health coverage. She asked if one city would cover it or would it be an equal share among the COG? Mr. Balthis stated the COG would ultimately make the decision. What they would have to look at is whether they would want to negotiate with one of the cities to add those employees onto theirs or if they wanted to hire a consultant to go out into the market and shop to see if they could join a group. They haven't gotten to that stage yet. When the employees join the COG initially, at that time, they would not be members of a bargaining unit, but they would have the right to form one. So, at that point, the terms and conditions of the health care would be something that would be negotiated. Ms. Pyke stated that their City Engineer is here, Tony Demasi. She asked him to touch on May's flooding at the Summit County Health Department and what has been done to prevent that. Mr. Demasi asked if Ms. Pyke was talking about the May 12, 2014, flooding that occurred. Ms. Pyke stated she is. Mr. Demasi stated Summit County completed a project to alleviate that flooding. They installed additional drainage and larger drains. The very large rains they have had since then that have caused flooding in other places repeatedly has not caused any flooding there. What they have done had abated at least those heavy rainstorms that they have seen since May 12, 2014.

Mr. James, Ward 7 Councilman for the City of Cuyahoga Falls, stated his ward is the east side of the Falls, the Waterworks area. He asked if they would be going into the new jobs with the same wages, more wages or less wages. Is it going to be an offer that's going to be tantalizing to them, or is it going to be more of a lateral move? Mr. Balthis stated they have been looking at both contracts with the City of Cuyahoga Falls and the City of Stow. They have also been talking with some of the current union leadership. They understand that dispatch is a very important community service. They understand that they have very talented people. He could assure them that the Cities' intent is to be fair in the approach. There is no way that they would plan on lowballing people. He thought they would try to make them comparable. Did he think that all employees would have the exact same wage today as they would at the COG? He isn't sure that that would be the case. Also, he would assume that if the COG were to form a union, it would then be negotiated with the COG. One thing he would note is, traditionally, the councils would be used to approve those collective bargaining agreements; however, in this case, it would be the COG, itself, that would approve those agreements and then, of course, a vote of the union members. He

**Committee-of-the-Whole**  
**September 20, 2016 – Page 13**

thought the market has a certain impact on what the prices are. He knew, from the COG perspective, it wouldn't make sense to come in low on wages to know that you probably then would have a union and then go to fact finding shortly thereafter. Those are things they would be working with the employees to try to be fair and responsible all the way around. Mr. James stated that he figured there wouldn't be any kind of lowballing. The governments in these cities are above par, so that isn't anything that he is trying to insinuate. He is just trying to get an idea, for the dispatchers, of what they might be facing in the near future. He thought that these talks were very beneficial tonight. He thought they are getting a lot of things on the table, a lot of thoughts and a lot of good, positive feedback. He, personally, is looking forward to seeing how this turns out. He would like to see it follow through to fruition.

Mr. Colavecchio, Cuyahoga Falls Councilman At-Large, stated that he did have a comment and a question or two. His comment is to the dispatchers here tonight. They are the unsung and unseen heroes, along with police and fire who are the visible faces. Their job is tough behind the scenes. He didn't think they got the recognition that they rightfully deserved. Now that they had this public forum, he wanted to recognize the invaluable service they provide. He is very encouraged that all of them would keep their jobs. This is not something that they are a replaceable part of. The training and the years of experience are crucial. The seamless transition that they are looking for would only be aided by them staying in their jobs. He asked them to all stay. He asked, concerning the other communities throughout Ohio that employ a COG system, if there is any downside. He asked if there is something negative, where services aren't provided in a manner that they would want to see in their communities, or expenses go awry for whatever reason, or is this always a significant savings. Mr. Balthis stated one comment that he would raise and he believe Swisscom had raised as a downside of a COG is, by creating a COG, you are creating a new political subdivision. That means you would have a new entity that needs to be audited by the State Auditor, so you have that process that must happen. You have a new employer, so you need people running the finances and doing the HR functions. Obviously, when a COG would negotiate, they would need attorneys to negotiate for the COG. So, the downside is a lot of the work that a lot of the communities are already doing now, the COG would need to do. The upside of that is, hypothetically, the City of Cuyahoga could provide IT or technologic support to the COG and then that would be considered in the service contract, and the City of Stow could provide financing, check writing or HR services. So, although you need to duplicate those services, because, from a legal perspective, they must have a separate one, they could absorb that into the cities that are already doing it.

Mayor Sara Kline stated that the only thing she would add is there is no better idea than one that you steal from other people. COGs are not a new concept. They aren't a new idea. They have been used extensively specifically throughout Ohio and especially for dispatch. So, they are certainly not breaking new ground with this idea. Mrs. Zibritosky and Mr. Balthis have done a tremendous amount of research and work into why a COG is a better option. She felt confident that their reasoning is sound, and the reasons they have put forth that a COG would better serve all partner communities into the future makes a lot of sense. Ultimately, it will be up to every member of the COG to ensure that that COG is functioning efficiently and appropriately, whether it's about service, finances, personnel, or all those things. The good thing is they would have checks and balances between all the partner agencies, even on the COGs Government Board if it is formed. Mayor David Kline stated when they created this in the City of Tallmadge, it was easy for their police officers and firemen to walk in the door, talk to a dispatcher, see their face and do

**Committee-of-the-Whole**  
**September 20, 2016 – Page 14**

everything. Now, they are up in Stow, so they are talking on the radio. It just wasn't that personal service that they used to get before. So, if an officer is used to dropping their report off at the desk at the dispatch center, it will now be located at a whole different location. That is a downside that they had experienced, but, with technology, it was very simple to overcome that.

Mr. Iula, Cuyahoga Falls Councilman At-Large, stated he is very interested in this. It sounds very good. It is great to see so many Councilmen from all three cities. He knew quite a few of them. He asked, because their dispatch center is only about 10 years old, if they combined with Stow, what would they do with the dispatch center they had right now? He asked if they had any idea. Paul Moledor, Cuyahoga Falls Fire Chief, stated he would love to have his room back. It is not that it isn't being used very well for dispatch, but they would repurpose it. There are a lot of things that they needed.

Mrs. Pyke stated that she did have a couple more questions. She wanted to speak to the dispatchers. They have an opportunity now when they are bargaining. She works at a job that is open 24/7. She works at a hospital. She hopes they looked at a shift differential. She thought it is important that people who must stay up at night and miss their families in the evenings have some sort of reward to this. She had spoken earlier to Mrs. Hatfield about this, so she knew that she felt this way. She also thought it is important that you honor seniority. When people have put in a great length of time and have committed to a position, it is important that you honor that. She didn't know how the voting would go, but she is asking that they please look at this not as to what's just best for one person, but what's fair and the best way to do this. She did like the idea of the Summit County Health Department's building as a regional location for the fact that it is right by the expressway. In their first meeting, she had had the privilege of meeting with other members of the Councils and the Administrations. They had talked about the Cuyahoga Falls microwave. She asked if anybody knew why they had brought that up. They said it would be used as a backup. Mr. Konich stated, currently, that is what they used to communicate with the dispatch consoles to the Summit County radio towers. They go through the microwave link. There is a microwave link that goes from the tower at Portage Trails to Blackstone. That is how the dispatchers, through their consoles, can communicate to the radio system. They would still employ that. Right now, Stow has the same setup, but they are going through NEONet, which is the building that is right down the street from the Summit County Health Center. Their fiber goes through there. They are now going to have two towers that will be able to serve that purpose. They can only use one of them at a time; however, that will be a redundant link. If one goes down, they will be able to switch over. Ms. Pyke wanted to ask a question that she knew her constituents would ask. If this moves forward, and she calls the dispatch center and says she needs help and lives at an address on Chestnut, how is dispatch going to know which Chestnut she is calling from, Cuyahoga Falls or Stow? Mrs. Hatfield stated that depends upon how it comes in. If it comes in on 911, they have phone systems that can help interpret that with latitude and longitude. If they are calling from a landline, it is going to give them an exact address. If they are just calling on the 10-digit line and giving them that address, all those lines are still going to be separate. They are still going to answer Cuyahoga Falls police to their 10-digit line, so they are going to know that you are calling for Cuyahoga Falls versus another community.

Russ Iona, Cuyahoga Falls Ward 8 Councilman, stated he had three questions focusing on financing. The Law Directors talked about the difference between the COG versus the service contract and gave some generalities. He asked if there are costs associated with forming this COG.

**Committee-of-the-Whole**  
**September 20, 2016 – Page 15**

They had mentioned a Fiscal Officer and, obviously, the amount of time they are putting into it. Mayor David Kline, who he knew and trusted, stated that the service contract is working out great. He realized that if they had to look at putting things together, they might run out of funding, but if something is working well, he asked if there is some way they could incorporate it, especially if they get other smaller entities that might be interested. He asked if it is possible to get something from Mr. Hoffman about the cost breakdown of \$1,490,000 for Motorola. He asked if there is a specific reason that they only had one provider on this. Mr. Hoffman stated Motorola is kind of the only game in town when it comes to providing the radio system that works with the County's system, so Motorola would be considered a single-source provider to provide these services. He would get them the quote that they had received from Motorola to build the dispatch center. If he isn't mistaken, he thought everybody used Motorola because of the Motorola backbone that they had in the County.

Mr. Balthis stated, regarding the question of any added costs to the COG, he didn't see an added cost directly performing a COG versus a service contract. Both require a fair amount of negotiation, time drafting ordinances and Council approval. He thought that the added work that the COG does generate is work that they are already used to doing, because, for example, the State Auditor's audit that the City would receive would be a little bit smaller because they wouldn't have a Communications Department that would need to be audited. There would be payroll processing and things like that, but then the City would have less of that to do, because they would no longer have a Communications Department that they would need to do that work for. He thought it isn't necessarily adding costs; it is just shifting them around a little bit differently. He thought the benefits of regionalization would overcome or outweigh the cost of the little bit of additional governance that they would require with a COG. He thought that the COG government structure also adds significant value over a service contract and it has a direct impact on those quality and service issues, which he thought would outweigh any minor costs. He, personally, did not see any unforeseen or additional costs just by choosing a COG versus a service contract. Mayor David Kline stated that the City of Tallmadge did have a service contract; however, as part of that contract, they are responsible for the cost of upgrades to the consoles. That is an open-ended cost. They know what their fixed rate is for providing dispatch service, but they know Stow is at the end of life for their consoles, so they must upgrade; therefore, they must pay for that capital upgrade. It is a pay-me-now or pay-me-later situation. If it is a COG, by having a lot more people in it, it would eventually reduce the cost. Therefore, he thought the COG may benefit Tallmadge, maybe not short term, but in the long-term.

Carol Klinger, Cuyahoga Falls At-Large Councilwoman, stated that, when they were talking about the Summit County dispatch, Mayor Sara Kline had inferred that she perceived that the size of their dispatch perhaps led to diminishing returns. She asked how large this COG could become before they run into diminishing returns and service. Mayor Sara Kline stated it is more of a balancing act that would have to be flushed out as the COG potentially grew. She believes the primary factor that she, Mayor Walters and Mayor David Kline are all committed to in this process is the quality of service. There are all kinds of news stories that they see in the Plain Dealer and other media sources about some dispatch centers in Cuyahoga County that are very large, where people talk about not getting the level of service that they rightfully should expect. They would never want to be in that kind of position, so whether that is strictly size, quality of training of staff, or investment that they put in in retraining and maintaining the standards of care and staffing levels that they need, she thought the members of the COG, the Board of Directors, ultimately need to

**Committee-of-the-Whole**  
**September 20, 2016 – Page 16**

keep that in mind as they are making decisions. If the City of Akron decided someday that they wanted to join their dispatch center, she thought the Board of Governors of the COG would have to think long and hard about whether they had the capacity and would want to do that. That is a very different conversation than, say, if the Village of Reminderville wanted to join. Ultimately, that quality of care, quality of service delivery to callers and first responders is the tipping point of if they are too large, can they manage what they have. That is an evolving process.

Ms. Klinger stated, in terms of COG, the entity, she is assuming it would be defined in the bylaws that the COG can issue debt bonds. She asked if that is accurate. She also asked if that is typical. Mrs. Zibritosky stated that is something that she and Mr. Balthis were considering earlier today. At this time, they do not believe that the COG can issue bonds on itself; only specific kinds by statute. There are certain kinds of COGs that can do that. She did not think this would be one of them. The members can issue bonds and dedicate those bonds to the COG; it would just have to be done in the proper way. Obviously, that would take the approval of the council and the city that would do that, and they would have to coordinate it with the bylaws. So, that can happen; it just has to happen through one of the member cities, or all of them, or however they choose to do it. Ms. Klinger stated she assumed the COG could enter a lease for the lease of the facility. She asked about a lease for the capital purchases, if they do a capital lease instead of a straight-out acquisition. Mr. Balthis stated, yes, could. The only other thing he would add about bonds and public financing is there are legal questions and challenges, but, from an investment banking perspective, the cities where their credit rates were would all be able to drive better financing terms, conditions and rates than the COG, even if they did it through a process they would be able to generate. So, it is something they would probably not explore; however, it is something they have looked at.

Ms. Klinger asked if anyone knew what the expected life of this new capital purchase would be. Captain Amonett stated that this is a technology-driven business and it rolls over exponentially fast. Sean, from Motorola, is present and can answer the questions specifically to the radio system. The consoles they are acquiring from Motorola are building out to the year 2039, so this is an expense on the radio side that is over a long term. The phone system seems to change almost overnight. They went from landline phones, meaning a landline 911, to cell phone answering 911 and, now, they are in a world where they want them to receive texts and video files. That side of the technology seems to roll over exponentially fast, but, for the radio system, itself, 2039 is a reasonable date for when they are going to have to make a change from that point, forward. Ms. Klinger asked if Motorola had a commitment that they would support the system through that time. Captain Amonett stated yes. The term for the P25 upgrade is built out on a long-term model. 2039 is the end date on it. Both Cuyahoga Falls and Stow have talked with Motorola. The money in front of you, the bids and paperwork behind that include support for that system through 2039. And to Ms. Klinger's questions about leasing, there is capital lease information from Motorola. He had Sean's information. If that is a better way to go financially than some other aspects, it could be looked at.

Ms. Klinger stated that they have heard about different concepts of how the additional services would be provided to the COG. She asked if they had looked at what the organization structure would be outside of dispatchers. She asked if they had looked at other COGs. Everybody in the room believes they are going to have dispatchers in the COG, but who else would be on the payroll and what else does that structure look like. Mayor Sara Kline stated they had, and that is part of their conversation when they met with the other COGs. A lot of it had to do with evolution over

**Committee-of-the-Whole**  
**September 20, 2016 – Page 17**

time. Swisscom is still a fairly-new COG. If she remembered correctly, they only formed two or three years ago, so they are still utilizing in-kind services from the entities. Other COGs, such as the Red Center, which is larger and has been in existence for 20 years or so, have some internal administrative people that do things. Again, Swisscom, being new and having a smaller number of entities, has the dispatch and dispatch supervisor. Everything else is done in-kind from the participating communities. Red Center, which is Stark County, has an administrative staff. She believes there are some COGs in Cuyahoga County and further northeast that also have some administrative staff. That would have to evolve as the need arose, the funding is there and all those kinds of issues. Ms. Klinger thanked all of them for coming together and putting the time into this. She thought regionalization is the way they all must go. She thanked everyone for putting their egos aside so that they could have these candid conversations. She hoped this is successful.

Mary Nichols-Rhodes, Cuyahoga Falls Ward 4 Councilwoman, agreed that this is a great thing. She is happy that they are being proactive. Her question had to do with the mandates that the State has given. She asked if the mandates for training and staffing are lower or higher than their current levels. She hoped that they would not go lower. Ms. DeRose stated, right now, Cuyahoga Falls and Stow are meeting, if not exceeding, those mandates. She would say they should be very proud that those two dispatch centers are very well respected in Summit County. They don't know what the future is going to hold, but some of the other mandates are time to answer a call, putting a caller on hold and emergency medical dispatch, which both centers already do and do quite well, and a lot of statistical requirements, such as how long did it take to get the call, how many calls they are getting and how long are they staying on the call. Those are somewhat new, but a lot of this new equipment they are pushing for will allow them to do that. Ms. Nichols-Rhodes asked if they knew what the mandates are based on, are they on population or number of calls. Ms. DeRose stated neither. The mandates are just blanket. It doesn't go by that and it doesn't go by volume of calls. The expectation is that no matter if you are a smaller or larger community, the standard of service is going to be the same across the board. Mayor Walters wanted to touch on the efficiency piece. Obviously, for their dispatchers now, they had them staffed properly. To combine, they are going to have probably double the number, which is very comforting in the case of a crisis or emergency, because, right now, if something catastrophic would happen, they are limited. Combined, they have more people to help manage that crisis. Again, to take on smaller communities, they are going to pay a contractual fee, but they are small, so they may not need them to add any staffing. He used Silver Lake as an example. They pay a fee. They don't generate a lot of calls. The smaller communities that they can take would help fund what they do, but they wouldn't have to add staffing. That is where the efficiency is gained.

The meeting was turned over to Stow President of Council Mike Rasor. Mr. Pribonic, City of Stow At-Large Councilman, stated, for the public's information, with his prior experience being on the School Board, COGs do work. Besides these types of ventures, they have worked in public education. It is nothing new. They are beneficial. One question he had is security. The Stow Dispatch Center is currently housed where the police department is. He asked what they are looking at for security for the dispatchers. Mayor Sara Kline stated she would start. Security is one of the challenges and one of the considerations that they considered, because this is a 365-day-a-year, 24-hour operation. It is imperative that dispatchers can function safely and securely during whatever crisis may be going on. Looking at the layout of the proposed area of the Health Department's building that Mr. Hoffman provided, they will notice that, in the back, there is a dedicated dispatch entrance. First, the building, itself, is locked and secured. Passcodes, swipe

**Committee-of-the-Whole**  
**September 20, 2016 – Page 18**

cards are needed to get in. There is an entrance noted on the layout that would be a dedicated dispatch entrance that dispatch, or police or fire departments coming to interface with dispatch will be able to use. They also had the opportunity to completely secure the dispatch area so it is exclusively for their use. There will be dedicated restrooms, kitchen facilities and all that under this plan, so that the dispatchers won't have to use community restrooms or expose themselves to leaving the dispatch area. She knew both Police Chiefs in Stow and Cuyahoga Falls had expressed to her that they feel confident.

(Some of the comments of Chief Davis and the person speaking after him weren't clearly audible because they weren't speaking into a microphone.)

Cuyahoga Falls Police Chief Davis stated that the police officers frequently visit the dispatch centers, so they are going to have police officers coming and going from the building. Mr. Pribonic knew the single entrance is the way to go; however, he asked if they shouldn't have a single entrance where they enter one area before they enter another. That is what they had right now in Stow. You must be buzzed into the Police Department before you could enter there. As additional security, he would like to have that looked at. An unidentified speaker stated they believed it is set up that way. You must have a card to get into the building and then you must have a special card to get into that area. Mr. Razor stated for future reference, comments from anyone talking without a microphone are not picked up on the tape. Mr. Pribonic stated that one other question that kind of goes along with Tallmadge is they were talking about representation on this COG. He asked if that would be the same representation no matter how large or how small a community would be. Mrs. Zibritosky stated that would be something that the COG would have to figure out when it establishes its bylaws for how it's going to govern itself. It could be related to the buy-in. It could be related to the size. It could be all equal in terms of the governing body. Mrs. Zibritosky stated that would be a procedure that would be laid out in the bylaws that the COG would make out. Mayor Sara Kline stated, when they met with some of the other COGs, it is done a variety of ways. She believed the Red Center has a formula where a couple of the largest entities have something almost like veto power, and then the smaller entities all, for practical purposes, have an equal vote, but, if they can't come to a consensus and they have to extrapolate out where people stand, the two largest entities have the final say and everybody else has a proportional vote based on their population and things like that. She thought Swisscom, right now, had all equal voting partners. Mr. Pribonic asked if Silver Lake would be a contract to the whole COG; not just to Cuyahoga Falls. Mr. Balthis stated yes.

Mr. D'Antonio, City of Stow At-Large Councilman, wanted to thank everybody. He knows, between the Mayors, Administrations, Dispatchers and Supervisors, a lot of work has gone into this from well beyond the first time that they had met to talk about this in length. He appreciated the fact that Ms. Klinger had mentioned the regionalization. Whether they like it or not, they are controlling their destiny, because the regionalization is going to happen. He would rather be on the front end of it. It didn't sound like there would be full-time security at the site, like they have at the courthouse. He had concerns with the security, as well. Mayor Sara Kline stated when they had talked about it conceptually, because it is a secure, locked building, she thought it would probably be more akin to how the dispatch center in Stow is now. On night shift, it is conceivable that everyone is out on the road and the dispatchers are in the building. With that being said, there is a lot of police presence and people in and out. She thought Police Chief Davis had mentioned that that is what would happen if the dispatch center is not in one specific city, but is formed

**Committee-of-the-Whole**  
**September 20, 2016 – Page 19**

together, except you would perhaps have more police departments interfacing, so there would be even more police presence. Cuyahoga Falls Police Chief Davis stated they didn't provide 24-hour security for the dispatch center now. They are located at a fire station. There is a pretty good flow of officers dropping off and picking up paperwork. Stow Police Chief Film agreed. He thought they were going to have officers there all the time. Is there going to be a time when there aren't any officers there? Yes. They had talked about having cameras outside of the building and having codes to get in. It isn't a hardened location, but they try to make it difficult for anybody else to get in besides their own officers.

Mr. D'Antonio believed Mrs. Zibritosky or Mr. Balthis had talked about getting something started by the end of the year. He isn't sure exactly what they are getting started. He knew how fast government moved. He isn't quite sure how fast three government entities could move. Mrs. Zibritosky stated that the main goal is to get the agreement that would form the COG by the end of the year. Does that mean that these issues and questions would be answered? Absolutely not. That is probably not going to be done by the end of the year; however, they wanted to at least determine who are going to be the members and are they all onboard with creating this COG. That way, the COG can move forward and start to create their bylaws, start to have the governing body, purchase equipment, perhaps enter a lease and move on from there. She thought the whole goal would be to have everything up and running by mid-2017. That is an aggressive goal, so there is a lot that is going to need to happen. At a minimum, they would have to at least have the agreement that this is what they are doing by the end of the year, or else each city is going to be under some real defined constraints to meet these mandates on their own. Mr. D'Antonio asked if there are any kind of grant opportunities for COGs and has that been considered, whether they are Federal or State, for equipment for the COG. Captain Amonett stated, on the Fire Department's side, they had explored the grant process. He believed Assistant Fire Chief Jackson, from Cuyahoga Falls, wrote the DHS grant for consoles. Captain Amonett stated, for the grant process, they could apply individually or collectively and not hurt one grant versus the other. That meant that the City of Stow Fire Department could write a grant for a fire truck and then sign-off collectively as part of a COG and write a grant for dispatching equipment for that specific entity, also, and not hurt one grant versus the other. They went down the road of exploring this process. Unfortunately, as times are changing, DHS is slowly drying up grant-wise. Ms. DeRose could probably speak to that. Most of that money comes from the Federal government down to the State and then thru EMA. The grant process goes back up that channel in reverse. The big-ticket purchasing off that grant is slowly starting to kind of wither on the vine.

Mr. D'Antonio stated it sounded like the City Councils will lose the ability to approve or disapprove a bargaining agreement. He asked if he had heard that right. Also, he kept hearing about safety, which, certainly, the most important part of it is safety and how they respond to the citizens of each community, but, hopefully, they aren't losing sight that each city is still individually in charge of their city. They still had two Chiefs and Dispatch Supervisors in charge of training. Because they are going to join the COG, Stow is not going to lose its great Fire Department or great service to the community. He would assume that is the same for the other communities. He didn't want people to think they are combining police and fire departments, because they certainly aren't. Mrs. Zibritosky stated Mr. D'Antonio had mentioned about losing the ability to approve the labor contracts. That is true; however, one of the benefits on why she and Mr. Balthis are recommending the COG as opposed to a service contract is consolidation is happening whether they wanted it or not with these new mandates and the PSAPs. So, if you are contracting with

**Committee-of-the-Whole**  
**September 20, 2016 – Page 20**

another agency, you lose your voice entirely. With a COG, you would still have members and representation that would be part of approving that. That is part of the reason why they thought that is a more beneficial system; whereas when you contract, you would have no say over any of that, you just have the cost that you pay and the built-in that is in the service. You have no ability to create good service benchmarks or negotiating that process at all. There are pros and cons; however, they are not completely frozen out of it. They had a voice.

Mr. Costello, City of Stow Ward 2 Councilman, wanted to start off by commending all the City Councils, the Administrations, the dispatchers and everybody involved in this process. It is great to see it moving forward. Unfortunately, being the old man on Council, a COG was tried many years ago with Tallmadge. Summit County and Akron are also trying to get involved in it. It did not go as well. He thought with the Mayors, City Administrations and the City Councils involved now, it would proceed better. They had a very aggressive timeline that they are trying to establish. To do that, the Councils and the Administrations need to continue to work together. He thought it could be done; however, as one of the other Councilors had said, they needed to leave their egos at home. Basically, this must be a win-win situation for all members of the organization; however, the biggest win must be for the citizens of each community. He commended everybody for the steps being taken.

Mr. Lowdermilk, City of Stow Ward 3 Councilman, stated that he appreciated all the information, the updates and the other Councils coming here to share this information with them. He did have several questions. He asked if there is any concern about there only being one entrance and exit to the Summit County Health building. Captain Amonett stated they are fully compliant as far as the building goes. It is one secured entrance for personnel to come in and out of. Mr. Lowdermilk stated he wasn't talking about the building, itself. He is talking about the driveway. There only one driveway. If something happens to that driveway, the dispatch center is going to be separated. Mayor Walters stated there is another access from the rear, off Charles Street, in Cuyahoga Falls, right in front of their middle school. It ties in. There are emergency bowers that can be run over, but it is connected to another street right behind the Health Department's building. Mr. Lowdermilk asked for a footprint of that so they could see it. Looking at it on the map, it didn't seem to show it. He asked if that is a road that would handle whatever traffic would need to get through there. Mayor Walters stated, yes, Charles Street, which comes off Hollywood, which comes off Hudson Drive.

Mr. Lowdermilk stated he had talked with Mr. Razor. He hoped that at the end of this, through the minutes, that they would be able to compile a list of the questions that were asked and the answers that they could distribute, because he is sure, a week from now, nobody is going to remember specifically what anybody said or asked. To keep them from asking the same questions, he thought that would be helpful. He stated that it was mentioned earlier that if they wanted to get out, they could. By the O.R.C. that is true; however, he thought they should be honest. It is going to be impractical for somebody who has dismantled their dispatch center and invested their money in this COG to go back and say they didn't think it was a good idea. Once they are in, he thought they were in. They aren't going to spend the money twice to get back out of it two years from now. He thought everybody needed to be clear about that. He asked if they are lobbying or have done anything with their State Representatives. It appeared that the State is trying to shove this down their throats. He didn't see any of their State Representatives present. He would hope they would be invited to the next meeting. He asked if they had done anything on the state level to try

**Committee-of-the-Whole**  
**September 20, 2016 – Page 21**

to slow this down or reverse it. Ms. DeRose stated, at the State level, there is a task force that has been in place. It has representatives from different legislative sectors along with the Commissioners and different things like that. This has been in process for probably 12 years. Finally, in the past year and a half, they have gone to these standards. Most of the Legislators, right or wrong, don't even realize that they don't have consolidated dispatch. They are one of the rare counties in the State. There are maybe five of them that have numerous Public Safety Answering Points. They are kind of a rarity. A lot of State Representatives don't understand it. The main thing they are looking at is their providing service to the public and the level of care. Mr. Lowdermilk stated, hopefully, they would engage them. They are elected officials, too, and he thought they would be interested in what is going on in their city and county levels.

Mr. Lowdermilk requested a breakdown of the itemized costs. The numbers didn't seem to jive. To upgrade Cuyahoga Falls and Stow, the CAD and recorders, it is \$1.7 million; yet, they are going to do CAD, recorders and mobile software for \$550,000. He isn't sure how that worked. They had \$1.2 million in cost savings with mobile software. He would like to see some of those things explained. He asked why it is so high. Currently, they have six dispatch centers in Stow. He thought, at any given time, they are using three or four of them. He saw they had a total of eight consoles proposed. He asked if there would be eight people working on any given shift. Mrs. Hatfield stated no. Right now, they did have six consoles just for Stow. They staff three to four of them. They have special events, such as the parade, floods and things that happen, where they do have to bring in extra staff. They always need a little bit extra just to plan for those types of things. Mr. Lowdermilk stated, in the COG, it showed eight. He asked if that is eight, total, for the COG. Mrs. Hatfield stated that included the extra consoles. They aren't planning on staffing eight per shift if that was what Mr. Lowdermilk was asking. Mr. Lowdermilk asked how many consoles does Cuyahoga Falls have. Mr. Konich stated five. Mr. Lowdermilk asked if they staffed five. Mrs. Hatfield stated it is the same kind of principle. They have five consoles. They generally staff two to three. Mr. Konich stated their minimum staffing is two, but they usually had three, sometimes four, depending on the shift. There are eight there because, when they have the COG, he is assuming that they would be going to probably have a minimum staffing of probably close to three or four; maybe even five. The other three consoles would be there in case there is an emergency or something is going on; if they needed to call in additional dispatchers, those consoles would be available. Mr. Lowdermilk stated asked if they thought they would staff this with fewer people on each shift once it is a COG. If Cuyahoga Falls has two to three now and Stow has three to four, that is seven to eight; then they have over twelve. He asked if they had enough consoles for the peak times that Mr. Konich was describing. Eight didn't sound like enough to him for those special events and things that he thought would add to these costs. Mrs. Hatfield stated there was potential for that. Their original plan is probably at least staffing five. If they had eight consoles, they would have three extra consoles to kind of manage special events. Mr. Konich stated if they had three on shift and they have four on a particular shift because it is a busy shift, that is seven people. In this new dispatch center, they may only have to staff four or five. They wouldn't need all seven of them, because they are all going to be in the same room sharing the same equipment.

Mr. Lowdermilk asked, once the COG is formed, if the Mayors or Chief Executive of each city had to be on the COG. Mrs. Zibritosky stated it would be how the bylaws would specify. She believed, by statute, if the bylaws don't specify how the representation is made or how it is selected, then that would be the default. It would be how the COG would determine, in their

**Committee-of-the-Whole**  
**September 20, 2016 – Page 22**

bylaws, they want to be represented, who they wanted and how it will choose that representation. It may be an internal election. She doesn't know. That would be something that would be determined, once the COG is formed, with the bylaws. Mr. Lowdermilk asked if the Councils would determine what the bylaws are. Mrs. Zibritosky stated, no, the COG would determine what the bylaws are once it is formed. Mr. Lowdermilk asked if the Councils would determine who is going to be their representative prior to it being formed or as it is formed. Mrs. Zibritosky stated it depends. If the bylaws allow for that, if they say they wanted a representative from each member's council, then, yes, they would do that. It depends on how the COG chooses, with its bylaws, to create that representation. If it does nothing or is not addressed, she believes, per the statute, the default would be the Mayors. She would have to look at it again to make sure. The bylaws could create some other different kind of procedure, one of which could be that the councils could choose a representative, but that would be up to the actual COG after it is formed. Mr. Lowdermilk asked if they choose to do something besides the Mayors or an elected official, who would that body be responsible to. Mrs. Zibritosky asked if Mr. Lowdermilk meant the governing body. Mr. Lowdermilk stated the COG. Mrs. Zibritosky stated it would govern itself. Ultimately, it would be responsible to the members in some form or fashion. As she said before, as a member, they are going to be apprised, at least annually, on all the activities and general finances that the COG is going to be doing; then it comes to whether they still want to be a member. They would always have the ability to withdraw if they wanted, but the COG would essentially be its own political subdivision, just as a city is. Ultimately, the City is accountable to run itself.

Mr. Lowdermilk asked what the cost is for purchasing or leasing. He asked if they are purchasing or leasing part of the Health Department's building. Mr. Hoffman, Cuyahoga Falls' Finance Director, stated he had been kind of heading up the building part of this. Right now, they are looking at a lease agreement with the Summit County Health Department. They are still in discussions with them. The lease agreement on the terms that they have with other tenants within that building are favorable when it comes to cost of leased office space within the county area. It is a very low cost. They are willing to offer it for only the cost that they incur on that building currently. Mr. Lowdermilk asked what the terms are they are looking at. Mr. Hoffman stated they are still working out the terms of the lease agreement. The initial thought would be a long-term lease agreement with a provision that if they were to sell the building, there would be some sort of right to purchase the building first and making sure that they had the space for the dispatch center. Mr. Lowdermilk asked what the square footage is they are looking to lease. Captain Amonett stated it is about 5,000 square feet.

Mr. Lowdermilk asked how many more cities could they absorb once it is a COG? Mayor Sara Kline stated there is not a maximum number. There is no cap. Again, it comes back to capacity and service levels. There is no arbitrary number or cap on the number of communities that could be members of or served by the COG. Mrs. Zibritosky stated another benefit of the COG versus a service contract is that, again, each member would have a voice on that; whereas if they all decided to contract with Cuyahoga Falls, Cuyahoga Falls could take on as many people as they wanted and they would have no say about it. Mr. Lowdermilk thought it might be premature, but as far as the COG's directors, if they are not elected officials, he asked if they saw those being full-time positioned managers. Mayor Sara Kline stated that the Board of Governors would absolutely be comprised of elected officials. There would likely and should be input and, perhaps, membership from other people who have expertise and knowledge. She thought it would be foolish of any entity to not include their police and fire chiefs in an advisory or membership role

**Committee-of-the-Whole**  
**September 20, 2016 – Page 23**

on the Board of Governors or however that shakes out. Certainly, there is no COG that they ran across in their research that did not have elected officials as the members of the Board of Governors. That is the whole concept. The Mayor, the Council Members, whomever, that is the elected official ultimately responsible to the voters of the members' entities. Therefore, it is in their best interests to make sure that they ensure efficient operations of the COG. That is the whole point.

Mr. Adaska, City of Stow Ward 4 Councilman, stated that most of his questions had been answered with the group questions. Mr. Razor stated he had had a good chance to ask questions during the meeting last month. He thought Mr. Colavecchio had brought up a great point. The great deal of value in this transaction for all cities is the labor and the employees that they have. To echo that, he requested that the dispatchers please stay. If they don't, the level of quality and service that their families have come to enjoy is in jeopardy. He asked people to try to make this an expedited second inning. He asked if there is anything pressing from Tallmadge on a second round of questioning. No new questions were raised.

Mr. Razor asked if there is anything pressing from Cuyahoga Falls on a second round of questioning. Mr. Colavecchio stated they said they are considering leasing the building. He asked if the purchase price would be determined, at the beginning of the lease, for an option to buy at the end, so they aren't caught unawares with an unreasonable price at the end of the lease. Mr. Hoffman thought the option to buy the building would have to be decided upon at the point in time in which the Health Department would come to them and say that they would like to sell it. He thought it is hard to say, early into the lease, what the market forces would be at the time that some sort of purchase agreement would come into play. He thought at that point in time is when they would have to sit down and talk about what it would mean to buy the building. Mr. Colavecchio stated his concern would be once they have that infrastructure in place, moving would not be a very good option. That is why he would want some concrete guarantee, at the beginning, that at least it would be pinned to something, like whether so many realtors would give input and then they would take the middle figure as far as an appraised value. He thought there should be, at the beginning, some methodology to pinpoint what that building should go for should the County sell it and they purchase it, so that they aren't forced to move because they price is exorbitant and unacceptable. Mr. Hoffman thought Mr. Colavecchio's point is well taken. When they get to the point of negotiating the lease term and signing a lease for the COG, they would look at that criteria. Mayor Sara Kline stated the representatives from each municipality or township that are appointed by the elected officials, so in the case of municipalities, the Mayors, and in the case of townships, the Township Trustees, are then the voting members who govern the Board of Health. She pointed this out to make sure that everyone understands that should the Health District determine, at some point in the future, that they want to sell that building, the individuals who are making that decision are appointed by some of the same elected officials who are going to be on the Board of Governors for the proposed cause. So, there is a synergy there that she thought shouldn't be overlooked. The Board of Health is not some distant entity that is not responsive to the public. It certainly is. It is also responsible to member entities that would be founding members of the COG.

Mr. Razor asked if there is anything pressing from Stow on a second round of questioning. Mr. Pribonic thought they had accomplished a great amount this evening. He suggested that they do this again one more time. He thought it is always good to be on the same page where they weren't wondering what one of the other cities is thinking. He suggested that they bring the group back

**Committee-of-the-Whole**  
**September 20, 2016 – Page 24**

together, when they get a little bit closer, to ask questions, because they must be on the same page. He thought what they had learned tonight is more than what they ever thought they would; however, he thought there are further steps to go, so he would like to see this happen again. He thought it has been a great learning experience and goes to show that communities can work together.

Mr. Lowdermilk stated, at least from the City of Stow's standpoint, and Cuyahoga Falls', too, looking at 5,000 square feet., they would want to take a hard look at where they might be able to expand currently, even if that meant an addition to a building. In the long-run, there may be more cost savings to add on to an existing building than to move the entire program somewhere else. He would like to see the group explore that. Maybe they had explored the cost of an addition to an existing building. Mayor David Kline stated they initially are looking at 5,000 square feet that they are looking to lease. This building is a lot larger than that, so there is room to expand into that current building after the current contracts from the people that are renting that location are gone. Mayor Sara Kline stated, from the City of Stow's perspective, even before they got too far in these costs, they looked at how they could physically expand their dispatch center. They had Mr. Dolson, Mr. Wren, Mr. Anderson and a whole host of people who have phenomenally creative ideas about those sorts of things, and they all agreed that it was cost prohibitive.

Mr. Rensel asked the separate councils how many meetings they had before the end of the year. For the City of Tallmadge, he believed they had five. Mr. Rasor stated the City of Stow had about the same. Ms. Pyke stated twelve. All their committee nights are also Council nights, so, at any point, they could call a Council Meeting. Mr. Rensel stated the reason he had asked is he thought it is ambitious to go back with the limited information. They had received a lot of information, but it still must be digested and processed. He thought the recommendation to come back is a good idea. Between now and the end of the year, he felt it is ambitious to come up with the specifics with the amount of Council Meetings left. Mr. Rasor stated he would anticipate that Councils would move at different paces. Maybe one would take three readings and bang it out and another would take an extra month or two.

Mr. Lowdermilk stated, based on Mayor Kline's comments, he would like to see if they had the square footage that they needed today, which appears to be 5,000 square feet, what their contingency is for expanding that if they need to, how much more square footage and what the cost of that is going to be per square foot. Mayor Walters believed it shows eight, which is what they would start with the build-out. It has capacity for sixteen, which he had been told would cover the entire County minus Akron. So, there is already room within the square footage to double without adding space. Mr. Lowdermilk asked if they thought they didn't need any more than 5,000 square feet. Mayor Walters stated he wouldn't think so. That would cover dispatch for the whole entire County, minus Akron, with sixteen consoles.

Mr. Adaska stated if they did meet again, he would like to see an organizational chart of the proposed structure of this new COG and what those costs would be. He thought that would be a good idea. He hated to be the one to bring it up, but he is probably, along with Mr. Costello. one of the older guys with the City of Stow. They had both been involved for a long time, back in the late '60s, when this same body, Tallmadge, Cuyahoga Falls and Stow, got together because they wanted to create a regional water district. They thought that would be a great idea. They met with the County, and the County chose to be the leader of that group. Tallmadge had to sign their waterlines over. Stow had to sign their waterlines over. He thought Munroe Falls is involved at

**Committee-of-the-Whole**  
**September 20, 2016 – Page 25**

that time. Stow, being a group that got their things done quickly, was the first in line to pass all the legislation. So, as they were talking with Mr. Razor about speeding things up and getting all of this done, he was sort of reminiscing back to when he was sitting in the room back then. It was all a rush then, too. Cuyahoga Falls decided, at the last minute, that they didn't like the whole proposal, so they backed out. Tallmadge backed out. Meanwhile, Stow had passed all its legislation and they are now part of a metropolitan water district consisting of one subdivision. He asked them to be careful. He asked them not to rush. He asked them to do it right if they are going to do it.

Mr. Razor stated they had gone through all the councils twice. He had promised that they would get to public comments. Stow's local rule is three minutes per person. Because of how late it is, he is going to strictly enforce that with a stopwatch. He asked if there is anyone in the audience who had a comment or questions, keeping in mind that there would be further meetings with each city to also ask questions.

Paul Zuravel, 3720 Gilbert Road, agreed with the Tallmadge Councilman that this is a lot to digest to come up with a decision on a COG by the end of the year. He asked who in this room, as taxpayers and citizens, thought that their response time is going to be any better than what it is right now because of this. He stated nobody. He didn't understand everything. He knew there is a lot of stuff going on; however, he thought what they had in place now seems to be working well. The location concerned him a little bit, because that building has flooded out. He had a newspaper from Cuyahoga Falls from 1990, and one of the conditions for that building being approved by the Planning Commission was that the storm water was tied into the sanitary sewer. He asked if they had corrected that, because that is illegal right now. He asked Mayor Sara Kline if she would be willing to put this type of issue on the ballot for the people, who would be the most affected by this, the citizenry that they are most concerned about, to vote on. Mayor Sara Kline stated that Mayors don't have the authority to place things on the ballot. Those are city council decisions. Mr. Zuravel asked if she would be willing to endorse placing it on the ballot for the people to vote on. Mayor Sara Kline thought that the combined Administrations had made their recommendations, and now it is up to Council to determine how they want to proceed. Mr. Zuravel did not feel that was an answer. He thought this could be a good idea in the future, but, right now, he thought there hadn't been enough public input in this. He didn't think that the meeting was very well publicized to the citizenry. There are very few citizens here. He would say they probably had half a million dollars in labor over the last year in man hours with all the people who are here. He thought the building may be logistically or geographically a good location, but it has flooded and he thought there might be better options.

Meeting adjourned at 9:18 p.m.