



TOWN OF SOUTHBOROUGH
FIRE AND POLICE DEPARTMENTS



DATE: July 5, 2023

TO: Andrew Dennington, Select Board Chair
Mark Purple, Town Administrator

FROM: Steven Achilles, Fire Chief
Ryan Newell, Police Chief

RE: Joint Position on Investing in Southborough's Emergency
Communications Center

In 2021 both police and fire chiefs provided an update on public safety communications to the Select Board. We emphasized strengthening the Emergency Communications Center (ECC), specifically improving operations and administration. Two approaches were presented; make a significant investment in our current operations or explore regionalization of dispatch. The Board supported the latter.

Over the next year an independent feasibility study was conducted with our regional partners. It was determined that we were well suited to establish a Regional Emergency Communication Center, as the communities shared and were supported by each other's resources. For many reasons, by late January 2023, only three communities remained committed to this venture.

Throughout the process, both of us maintained that we should improve Public Safety Emergency Communication Operations. This could be accomplished through appropriately staffing and funding current Southborough operations or by collaborating with other towns through a Regional Emergency Communications Center (RECC).

Unfortunately, it was evident following Town Meeting that there was no support from the community or Select Board to pursue regionalization as recommended by the 2022 study and by both police and fire chiefs. Therefore, we have embarked on a focused

approach to invest in our current dispatchers and emergency communications center. It is our intention to make a presentation on our recommendations to the Select Board and seek community support at the next scheduled town meeting.

Understanding that there are some that wish to revisit regionalization, it is our position that we should have the opportunity and support to maintain our current path. If after a review by the appropriate boards that investing in our current operations and employees is not appropriate or sustainable, then we suggest we reach back out to our original regionalization partners to ascertain the ability to be part of their efforts again.

We are both available to discuss further as required.