

RESOLUTION NO. 2019-_____

A resolution terminating City of Spokane participation in the project to integrate 911, dispatch, and non-emergency communication services known as SREC.

WHEREAS, one of the City’s primary responsibilities is management and funding of public safety operations; and

WHEREAS, the City’s Regional Project Manager briefed the Council in July of 2017 of a project exploring the idea of integrating emergency dispatch and communication services under one entity; and

WHEREAS, the City’s Regional Project Manager stated the intent of the project was to save the City money, be more efficient, and provide the same or better level of service – all of which were “non-negotiable”; and

WHEREAS, the Spokane City Council unanimously adopted Resolution 2017-0080 on September 11th, 2017, exploring the potential integration of 911 Emergency Communication, Non-Emergency Crime Reporting, and Emergency Communications; and

WHEREAS, Resolution 2017-0080 officially specified the criteria for joining an integrated system including a requirement that the integration would not result in “direct job loss of any employee”, and the integration would provide “the same or greater level of service delivery for constituents at an equal or lesser cost”; and

WHEREAS, Spokane Regional Emergency Communications (SREC) imposed an arbitrary deadline on the City of Spokane of May 23, 2019 to indicate participation in a regional emergency communications project; and

WHEREAS, Spokane City Council members made multiple requests for project information beginning in late 2017 including requests for project briefings at the City Council’s Public Safety Committee; and

WHEREAS, SREC Governing Board leadership and the Executive Director did not provide the City Council a project update for more than five months; and

WHEREAS, the SREC financial model was due to the Spokane City Council’s Public Safety Committee in Quarter 2 of 2018 and was only briefed to Council on March 14, 2019; and

WHEREAS, 30-40% of all calls currently received by Spokane Police Dispatch are handled by dispatch professionals freeing up critical time for officers in the field to respond to higher priority calls; and

WHEREAS, under the proposed SREC level of service model, the 30-40% of calls handled currently by Spokane Police Dispatch would be pushed to officers in the field, creating resource constraint and a reduction in level of service to Spokane citizens; and

WHEREAS, Spokane Police Officers have called this new proposed level of service model “devastating” for our citizens; and

WHEREAS, SREC leadership has not agreed to a Spokane Police Department level of service at current or greater service standards; and

WHEREAS, the Spokane City Council requested from SREC the ability of the Spokane Police Department and Spokane Fire Department to authorize and approve any level of service changes that would impact our citizens; and

WHEREAS, SREC leadership has not delegated the authority to approve level of service changes affecting Spokane citizens to the Spokane Police Department and Spokane Fire Department; and

WHEREAS, the Spokane City Council opposes any reduction in law enforcement level of service for its citizens as a result of the integration of emergency communications, dispatch, and non-emergency crime reporting; and

WHEREAS, the Spokane City Council unanimously adopted Resolution 2018-0039 on May 14, 2018 which reaffirmed the standards of Resolution 2017-0080 including level of service, dispatch employee job guarantees (positions, seniority status, shift preferences, training, compensation, benefits, and bargaining unit representation status), and proportional representation based on the “number of calls for service received by the Combined Communications Center (CCC) which originate in Spokane”; and

WHEREAS, SREC failed to guarantee dispatch employee jobs at the specified standards of Resolution 2018-0039, and is asking city of Spokane taxpayers to fund the balance of the pay cut City of Spokane dispatch employees would receive if transferred to SREC; and

WHEREAS, approximately 60% of all emergency response calls originate within Spokane, yet the City of Spokane only comprises 3/10ths of the SREC Governing Board; and

WHEREAS, no elected official from the City of Spokane currently serves on the SREC Governing Board (nor is one authorized to do so), lacking critical oversight and accountability to city taxpayers and City of Spokane employees; and

WHEREAS, the City Council President sent a letter to the SREC Executive Director on September 17, 2018, formally requesting proportional representation on the SREC Governing Board for the City of Spokane; and

WHEREAS, the Spokane City Council received a letter from SREC on October 4th, 2018, denying the City of Spokane's request for proportional representation; and

WHEREAS, Spokane voters in 2017 voted overwhelmingly for Spokane County Proposition 1 which sought to "keep current emergency communications systems functioning and reliable", "improve the 911 system and emergency notification system", "maintain public safety communication devices", and "integrate Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) for faster response times"; and

WHEREAS, neither the ballot language nor the promotional material mentions to voters the intent to use the 1/10th emergency communications for a new government entity meant to supplant dispatch services; and

WHEREAS, the Spokane City Council requested and SREC has refused to provide the previously promised existing legal opinion from Spokane County Attorney Jim Emacio regarding the limitations of the 2017 ballot language on the use of 1/10th emergency communications funds to supplant dispatch services outside of Crime Check and 911; and

WHEREAS, SREC has failed to agree or negotiate the basic necessities for City of Spokane participation in an integrated 911 system as adopted by resolutions 2017-0080 and 2018-0039; and

WHEREAS, SREC has failed to grant the Spokane City Council's request to meet with the SREC financial employee to learn about the proposed capital replacement plan for handheld radios and other equipment that comprise the highest priority for 1/10th emergency communications spending; and

WHEREAS, SREC has not provided to the Spokane City Council the requested information necessary to make an informed decision on behalf of Spokane taxpayers before SREC's arbitrary deadline of May 23, 2019.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Spokane City Council City of Spokane will not participate further in the SREC project until the previously requested information has been provided, the previous SREC promises confirmed and it appears to the Spokane City Council as evidenced by a majority vote to be in the best interests of all residents in the City of Spokane; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City of Spokane extends an invitation to any agency contracting for dispatch services under the current Combined Communications Center (CCC) interlocal agreement to remain committed to the interlocal agreement; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Spokane City Council requests staff to develop a financial and operational plan for Spokane Fire and Spokane Police dispatch services as outlined in Spokane Municipal Code 03.10.070 and 03.12.010.

PASSED by the City Council on _____.

Council President

Attest:

Approved as to form:

City Clerk

Assistant City Attorney

Mayor

Date

Effective Date