

The Carbon County Commissioners Response to the Mayors Questions Regarding Dispatch Charges

Given the confusion regarding the assessment of dispatch costs for the incorporated towns within Carbon County, I will attempt to provide some clarity to the issue.

The towns of Bridger, Fromberg, Joliet, and Red Lodge have been a part of an Interlocal Agreement for Dispatch Services with Carbon County for well over 20 years. The current formula for costs of dispatch services was written in 2013. There have been no changes to the plan as intimated by some of the mayors and the Carbon County News. The Interlocal Agreement between Carbon County and the towns, anticipated annually adjusted costs that cover the actual cost of staffing, operations costs, and costs of equipment. Carbon County has had to invest in new equipment to provide improved communication coverage across the entire county. Carbon County issued Requests for Proposals for improvements to the 911 system and made the recommended upgrades to improve system reliability and coverage.

The towns of Bridger, Fromberg, Joliet, Red Lodge and Carbon County met in the Commissioner’s Office on June 27th, 2013 to discuss the formula for allocating costs to each entity.

Below is an explanation of the formula to determine dispatch costs for each municipality.

1. Total number of dispatch calls County wide and the total number of law calls for each town;
2. Figure the percentage of total calls from each town;
3. Multiply the percentage of calls from each town into the total cost of operations.
4. Carbon County contributes 30% to each towns dispatch costs, reducing towns cost to 70% of total obligation
5. Towns portion of taxes paid in to the county communications fund are subtracted
6. Towns 911 funds received by the county from the state are subtracted
7. Each year’s payment is the average of the current year’s share and the previous two year’s share.

	2014	Co. Wide	Bridger	Joliet	Fromberg	Red Lodge	County
1.	Total calls	2385	373	169	63	620	1160
2.	% of calls	100%	15.6%	7.1%	2.6%	26%	49%
3.	Cost of calls (by % of calls)	\$745,613	\$116,609	\$52,834	\$19,695	\$193,828	
4.	70% call cost		\$81,626	\$36,984	\$13,787	\$135,680	
5.	Taxes		(\$4,589)	(\$3,127)	(\$1,845)	(\$42,223)	
6.	911 funds		(\$7,179)	(\$6,118)	(\$4,423)	(\$21,598)	
	Town share '14		\$69,858	\$27,739	\$7,519	\$71,859	
	Town share '12		\$2,654	\$4,124	\$ 917	\$9,553	
	Town share '13		\$6,261	\$7,707	\$2,721	\$11,595	
7.	Average 12-14		\$26,258	\$13,190	\$3,719	\$31,002	\$671,444
	% total '14 cost		3.5%	1.8%	.5%	4.2%	90.0%

Note: numbers rounded up

Letters that were sent to the towns April 2, 2015 offered a new contract to extend the rolling average period from three (3) to five (5) years to help ease the impact to the towns. We understand the impact to each entity’s budget and appreciate the difficulty in finding additional funding for these programs. It may have been appropriate for Carbon County to notify each of the town’s Mayors whenever we had a meeting regarding improvements to the 911 Dispatch system, however each town and respective law enforcement agencies and EMS providers are a part of the Carbon County Local Emergency Planning Council where those improvements were discussed in addition to the many Commissioner meetings that were on our published agenda.

John Prinkki, Presiding Officer
Board of Carbon County Commissioners