

City and County to discuss combined dispatch center

(KLZA)-- Falls City Council members discussed a proposal to combine Falls City and Richardson County dispatching centers and relocating the Public Service Answering Point for 911 calls to the Richardson County Law Enforcement Center when they met Monday evening.

City Administrator Gary Jorn noted the topic is nothing new as several sheriff administrations have brought the idea to the City in recent years.

Jorn said that currently, based on demographics it makes sense to look into the possibility, especially if it would save county and city residents tax dollars.

The idea was discussed by Richardson County Commissioners last week, and city representatives have discussed the idea with County Commissioner John Caverzagie and Sheriff Rick Hardesty. The County would like the City Council to decide if they want to move forward with a change, since the final decision rests with the City.

First Ward Councilman Don Ferguson said he feels its a good discussion to have. He asked that Sheriff Hardesty and one of the Commissioners could come to a Council meeting to further discuss the topic.

Second Ward Council member Kaylee Ractliffe raised several concerns about the proposal including instability at the Sheriff's Office since Sheriff Hardesty was appointed and not elected to the position and quite a bit of turnover in staff. Ractliffe said the City dispatchers are well trained and good at their jobs.

Jorn told the Council if the change were made none of the City dispatchers would lose their jobs, he said the Sheriff has committed to keeping all the dispatchers on staff. Jorn said if the change were made, the City would have to work with the Sheriff's Office at first on state reports and the financial aspects.

Following the discussion the Council agreed to continue looking further into a combined dispatch center.

Many Signals Communications