



South Worcester County Communications Center

357 Main Street • Webster, MA 01570 • 508-943-1212
Serving the Towns of Webster and Dudley, Massachusetts



Gregory Lynskey, Communications Center Director

REPORT OF THE SOUTH WORCESTER COUNTY COMMUNICATIONS CENTER

The South Worcester County Communications Center (SWCCC) completed its sixth full year of operation during the 2020 Calendar Year. SWCCC is governed by an Inter-Municipal Agreement between the towns of Webster and Dudley, with Webster acting as the designated fiduciary for the Center.

SWCCC provides services to the towns as a Public Safety Answering Point for 911 calls as well as Emergency Dispatch Services for Police, Fire, and EMS departments in both towns. The SWCCC also answers business calls and non-emergency calls for service, requests for Animal Control, and after hours Department of Public Works requests.

A Board of Directors is the governing body of the Center. An Operations Board develops the operational procedures for the center. The day to day operations are overseen by a Communications Center Director. The Center is staffed 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, 365 days per year with a minimum of two certified and highly trained Public Safety Telecommunicators.

Through the assistance of the State 911 Department, SWCCC has received a total of \$2,186,347 through regional development grants in FY2014 through FY2017. Funding from these grants have covered such capital items as a \$500,000 dispatch radio system, \$150,000 in portable radios for responders, \$80,000 in base station radios, \$75,000 in mobile computers for police cruisers, ambulances, and fire apparatus, and complete outfitting of the dispatch center. Many of these items were long overdue for replacement and purchase would not have been possible without these grants. The State 911 Department has also provided SWCCC with approximately \$2,720,000 in Support and Incentive Grant funding, \$173,000 in Training Grant funding, and \$25,200 in EMD Grant funding as part of its annual grant programs to offset operational costs.

In 2020, the SWCCC answered a total of 31,810 calls for service, which represents a 5.7% decrease from 2019. Of these, 22,065 calls for service originated in the Town of Webster while 9,745 calls for service originated in the Town of Dudley. Requests for police services totaled 23,211, fire services totaled 1,490, and EMS services totaled 7,109.

A total of 7,686 wireless and wireline 911 calls were answered by the center. 99.55% of all 911 calls were answered within 10 seconds, far exceeding the industry standard of 90% of calls being answered within 10 seconds. 5,323 calls originated from cellular devices with 75% of those coming to SWCCC directly without the need for a transfer from a relay center. In total, 5,037 911 calls originated in Webster and 2,007 911 calls originated in Dudley. 542 calls originated in another jurisdiction and were either transferred in to the SWCCC for processing or were transferred out for processing by another PSAP. SWCCC also answered and processed 20 Text to 911 sessions. As texting becomes a far more prominent portion of our society, this is a natural evolution to have the ability to Text 911. It is important to remember though, you should always Call 911 if you can and only text 911 if you can't call.

Board of Directors:

Jonathan Ruda - Chairman
Doug Willardson – Vice Chairman
Randy Becker - Member
John Marsi - Member

Operations Board:

Dean Kochanowski - Chairman
Michael Shaw - Vice Chairman
Steven Wojnar - Member
Brian Hickey – Member
Gary Milliard - Member

In 2020, the Dispatchers of the SWCCC were met with a challenge like never before. The COVID-19 Pandemic changed the way of life and it changed the way dispatchers needed to perform their job. SWCCC Dispatchers have had to deal with countless fluid policies related to the pandemic, most notably the need to screen each and every call for COVID concerns. This was implemented initially in March for EMS calls, expanded in May for all calls, reduced back to EMS calls through the summer, and re-implemented for all calls in November. Additionally, the questions utilized as part of the screening have changed multiple times to keep current with the changing outlook of the pandemic. These additional steps have proven vital to the safety of the first responders as the number of first responders in Webster and Dudley impacted by exposure during emergency response has been remarkably low.

Meeting this challenge would not have been possible without the unbelievable dedication of the SWCCC Dispatchers. Quite possibly most remarkable is the fact that SWCCC dispatchers have continued to commit themselves to the citizens of Webster and Dudley every single day since the pandemic began. Dispatchers did not have the option of working remotely, being on furlough, or working in alternative environments like nearly ALL of the general public did. Dispatchers continued working each and every day in their usual environment with continued interaction with public safety partners, walk-in members of the public, and monitoring of prisoners in the Webster PD Lockup. Their dedication is extremely commendable.

Also worthy of note, 2020 marked the second full year of the SWCCC contracting with the Denise Amber Lee Foundation to provide Quality Assurance of our emergency medical calls. The SWCCC utilizes PowerPhone as a provider for protocols to provide Emergency Medical Dispatch services. PowerPhone's standard is to review 10% of 911 medical calls and to achieve a Quality Assurance Rating of 85%. I am beyond pleased to report that in 2020, SWCCC dispatchers averaged a remarkable 90% rating for the 334 911 medical calls that were reviewed!

Additionally in 2020, the State 911 Department continued to implement operational changes to the 911 System. In FY2018, State 911 enacted the Wireless Direct program where wireless 911 calls that presented with a high accuracy location data (Phase 2) were delivered directly to the SWCCC rather than a relay center. In FY2019, text-to-911 was implemented where citizens can send a text to 911 to report an emergency. In FY2020, RapidSOS was rolled out which utilizes commercial GPS data to provide better pinpointing of 911 calls.

In FY2021, Wireless Direct was revised to include all 911 calls which had either high accuracy location data (Phase 2) or are processed on a cell tower in Webster or Dudley (Phase 1). While this provides far greater direct calls to Webster and Dudley without the need to go through a relay center, it has led to an increase in calls received by the SWCCC that are actually intended for a surrounding area. The SWCCC has seen approximately 12-15 additional 911 calls per day as a result of the change.

As we move into 2021, the Center is continuing with a model of professional, uniform, and dedicated service to its member agencies and the communities in which it serves. The Center continues to demonstrate it is a first class Regional Emergency Communications Center.

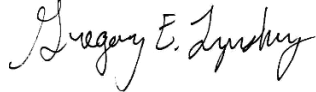
We also continue to seek out additional communities to join the Center. As of the time of this writing, the SWCCC has continued to have communications with local communities regarding joining the SWCCC however no formal agreements have been put in place.

I'd like to thank Dispatcher Charles McGowan who stepped down in March after 5 years to take a position as a Firefighter with the Uxbridge Fire Department. I'd also like to thank Pedro Jorge who stepped down in September after 2 years to continue a pursuit of a career in law enforcement. We wish them both well in their new endeavors. Dispatcher McGowan remains with the SWCCC in a per-diem capacity.

In 2020, SWCCC received four formal complaints. Following review of the circumstances, two complaints had sustained findings while one complaint was unfounded and one complaint was not substantiated.

In closing, I would like to thank the Board of Directors, the Operations Board, and most importantly the dispatchers who are employed by the SWCCC. Without the tireless efforts of all and without the cooperation amongst all levels of our operation, the Center would not be where we are today.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Gregory E. Lynskey".

Gregory Lynskey

Board of Directors

Jonathan Ruda – Chairman
Doug Willardson – Vice Chairman
Randy Becker – Member
John Marsi – Member
Paul Joseph – Alternate
Earl Gabor – Alternate
Courtney Friedland – Alternate

Operations Board

Dean Kochanowski – Chairman
Michael Shaw – Vice Chairman
Steven Wojnar – Member
Brian Hickey – Member
Gary Milliard – Member

Communications Center Director

Gregory Lynskey

Full-Time**Public Safety Telecommunicators**

Rebecca Prefontaine, Supervisor
Veronica Oleszewski, Supervisor
Kristin Munger
Bonnie Pearl
Joan Laplante
Paige Moroz
Bryan Blomgren
Samantha Putis
Elizabeth Fish

Part-Time**Public Safety Telecommunicators**

Scott Baldracchi
Steven Chenard
Victoria Longo
Charles McGowan
Brittany Morgan