



South Worcester County Communications Center

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



Gregory Linskey, Communications Center Director

REPORT OF THE SOUTH WORCESTER COUNTY COMMUNICATIONS CENTER

The South Worcester County Communications Center (SWCCC) completed its eighth full year of operation during the 2022 Calendar Year. SWCCC is governed by an Inter-Municipal Agreement between the towns of Webster & Dudley, with Webster 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 \$2,684,499 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 \$3,993,000 in Support and Incentive Grant funding, \$246,900 in Training Grant funding, and \$51,900 in EMD Grant funding as part of its annual grant programs to offset operational costs.

Most notably in regard to the State 911 Grant assistance, during Calendar Year 2022, nearly \$500,000 in grant funding was secured towards a long overdue radio upgrade project. Funding has been secured in portions over several grant cycles with now to date, \$800,000 having been secured through grant funding. Additionally, during the calendar year, the Town of Webster allocated approximately \$300,000 towards the project out of free cash and the Town of Dudley allocated approximately \$60,000 from ARPA funds to the project.

The radio project consists of migrating radio communications from traditional, antiquated analog technology to modern, significantly improved digital technology. Funding obtained to date will allow for substantial completion of the upgrades for Webster Police, Webster EMS, and Dudley Police. Webster Fire will see partial completion, while Dudley Fire will be part of a forthcoming funding request. The remaining unfunded portion of the project is estimated to be approximately \$300,000 for which grant funding is being requested.

In 2022, the SWCCC answered a total of 31,286 calls for service, which represents a 3.3% decrease from 2021. Of these, 21,933 calls for service originated in the Town of Webster while

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9,353 calls for service originated in the Town of Dudley. Requests for police services totaled 23,646, fire services totaled 975, and EMS services totaled 6,665.

A total of 9,295 wireless and wireline 911 calls were answered by the center. This represents a 6.0% decrease from 2021, however 2021 saw an unprecedented increase of nearly 30% over prior years. 99.18% of all 911 calls were answered within 10 seconds, far exceeding the industry standard of 90% of calls being answered within 10 seconds. 6,761 calls originated from cellular devices with 91.6% of those coming to SWCCC directly without the need for a transfer from a relay center. 6,324 911 calls originated in Webster and 2,208 911 calls originated in Dudley. 642 calls originated in another jurisdiction and were either transferred in to the SWCCC for processing or were transferred out for processing by another PSAP. 121 911 calls did not provide sufficient information for reporting software to identify the community of origin. SWCCC also answered and processed 23 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.

While the direct impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic presented far less of a challenge to the SWCCC throughout 2022, the indirect impacts made for another challenging year. As has been seen throughout public safety and across many professions in general, the available workforce seeking positions is at an all time low. Due to the challenge seen by lack of applicants for open positions, the SWCCC operated for the entirety of 2022 down two full time positions. Fortunately, as we approach the end of the year, two candidates are nearing completion of their training which will be a welcome addition to the schedule. Meeting this challenge would not have been possible without the unbelievable dedication of the SWCCC Dispatchers. For the second straight year, Dispatchers were forced to work an extraordinary amount of hours throughout the year due to experiencing the reality of two long term vacancies.

Also worthy of note, 2022 marked the fourth 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 2021, SWCCC dispatchers averaged a remarkable 91% rating for the second straight year, and third out of the last four years, with all four years of reviews by the Foundation showing SWCCC dispatchers achieving 90% or greater, far exceeding the standard! For calendar year 2022, 419 911 medical calls that were reviewed, indicating a 7% increase in emergency medical calls for the year.

As we move into 2023, 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 informal communications with local communities regarding joining the SWCCC however no formal agreements have been put in place.

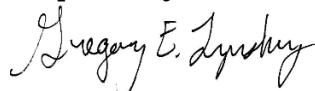
I'd like to thank Dispatcher Nicole Albright who stepped down in July after 1.5 years to relocate back to her home state of Vermont and Dispatcher Charles McGowan who stepped down from his per-diem position in June after a total of 7.5 years.

In 2022, SWCCC received five formal complaints. Following review of the circumstances, two complaints had sustained findings while three complaints was unfounded.

I would also like to wish the very best to Dudley Police Chief Steven Wojnar who is retiring in early 2023. Without Chief Wojnar's vision and dedication, the existence of the SWCCC would have never been possible. We are extremely grateful for his unwavering support of the SWCCC and all of our Dispatchers and wish him a long, happy, healthy, and well-deserved retirement.

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,



Gregory Lynskey

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Steven Sullivan – Member
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Communications Center Director

Gregory Lynskey

Full-Time

Public Safety Telecommunicators
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Veronica Oleszewski, Supervisor
Kristin Munger
Bonnie Pearl
Joan Laplante
Samantha Putis
Abagayle Fournier
Stephen Bouchard
Jessica Mahota
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