



Wauwatosa Police Department

Departmental Correspondence

DATE: 2/23/26

TO: Government Affairs Committee (GAC) for 3/17/26

FROM: Capt. Luke Vetter & IT Dir. Jalal Ali

SUBJECT: Resolution to enhance Wauwatosa dispatch capabilities to handle wireless (cellular) 911 calls

ATTCHD: Draft resolution language

Issue

Currently, wireless (cellular) 911 calls originating within the City of Wauwatosa are routed out of the city. These calls go to the Milwaukee County Emergency Communications Center and are then transferred back to our Wauwatosa Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP), or dispatch center, where our staff then dispatches resources. Unfortunately, this introduces unnecessary delay and confusion to our cellular 911 customers.

Background/Options

Wauwatosa PSAP can assume direct handling of wireless 911 calls originating within our City limits. This is an operational change focused only on who answers these calls and how quickly they are answered. There would be no change in the dispatching of emergency services.

Additionally, Milwaukee County Ordinance Chapter 91, Cellular Network 911 Calls, governs how cell 911 calls are currently handled, and requires a resolution to trigger this change:

- 91.03: *“Enhanced 911 service area. All of the municipalities within the county have approved local resolutions pledging to provide enhanced 911 services.”*
 - This proposal is in line with our pledge to Milwaukee County.
- 91.06: *“Direct line routing. AT&T Aetna Court tandem will serve as the county central wire center, receive all dialed 911 calls dialed in the county and route those calls to the proper database and, ultimately, to the appropriate PSAP.”*
 - This resolution would give Wauwatosa the authority to handle cellular 911 calls, and would also give permission for AT&T and cell tower providers to route those calls directly to our PSAP.

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The transition work would be done in partnership with existing cell phone and radio communication partners. This proposal is meant to keep up with required technology enhancements that our community deserves. Several PSAPs in the area already handle wireless 911 calls within their jurisdictions. Based on current staffing levels, call volume, and operational readiness, our PSAP and its staff are fully prepared to assume this responsibility.

Strategic Plan Areas of Focus

This technology improvement is intended to:

- Reduce call transfers & enhance caller experience
- Increase call handling efficiency
- Increase response time of first responders within our city

This initiative aligns with City Strategic Priority #2-Public Safety, as well as the Police Department's Strategic Goals #2-Organizational Efficiencies and #3-Technology enhancements.

City's Strategic Plan - <https://www.wauwatosa.net/government/open-government/strategic-plan>
PD's - <https://www.wauwatosa.net/home/showpublisheddocument/6007/638717489545130000>

Fiscal Impact

There are no additional costs for approving this enhanced cellular 911 service resolution if completed as part of required system upgrades. Our current PSAP systems are near end of life. This transition has been planned for and budgeted by IT and PSAP/Police as part of a multi-year strategy of improvements. Additionally, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and Wisconsin Office of Emergency Communications (WOEC) require upgrades of all PSAPs within the state.

The proposal and resolution are separate and independent of any potential FD merger/dispatch center steps. However, no unnecessary PSAP upgrades or existing capital funding will be used until the merger reports, including the dispatch center report, have been received and reviewed.

Recommendation

The Police & IT Departments recommend approval of this proposal and resolution so our PSAP can assume direct handling of wireless 911 calls within the City. The goal is to improve efficiency, reduce call transfers, and enhance the delivery of public safety services. When the transition is complete, a formal announcement will be provided to City Officials, City Staff and the community.

See the attached draft resolution language to consider for adoption and approval.

Respectfully,



Captain Luke Vetter - Administrative Bureau