

Richardson Co will need to decide soon on dispatching (KLZA)-- Time is running out for Richardson County Commissioners to make a decision on the future dispatching for the Richardson County Sheriff's Department.

Southeast Nebraska Communications 911 in Beatrice is currently doing dispatching for the Sheriff's Department but since the contract began there have been issues with communication as well as equipment being compatible.

During the December 19th county board meeting, Interim Beatrice Police Chief Jay Murphy met with Commissioners concerning renewal of a dispatching contract.

Prior to Murphy being named Interim Chief, Richardson County was told to renew the contract the price would be \$360 thousand which was an increase of approximately \$170 thousand from the original contract. At that point, Richardson County began to look at options for dispatching including returning to having the Falls City Police Department handle the dispatching.

Murphy told Commissioner John Caverzagie and Rick Karas that he was able to offer a renewal rate of \$200 thousand. He noted that most of the calls from Richardson County are for traffic stops and feels the \$360 thousand proposal was unfair.

The Commissioners have been in contact with the City of Falls City trying to find out what the costs would be to return to having Falls City handle the dispatching. The costs discussed were not revealed during Tuesday's meeting.

Because of equipment issues, and changes made in dispatching rural fire departments, what was agreed to in the original contract is not what has been occurring. Commissioner Rick Karas said he feels the \$200 thousand asking price is too much, noting that for three years, Richardson County has paid for services not delivered, thus overpaying.

Murphy said it is now possible for Southeast 911 to dispatch everything outside the city limits of Falls City. Sheriff Rick Hardesty pointed out there would still be some issues with the Falls City Volunteer Ambulance Squad providing service to villages within the county.

Murphy said he will work with the County to make sure the bugs are worked out of the system.

**Commissioner David Sickel was absent due to illness and no decisions on the dispatching were made.**

**The current contract with Southeast Communications 911 expires in August, 2024.**

Many Signals Communications