

Police Consolidation Community Meeting

Question and Answer Session

Villages of Hinsdale and Clarendon Hills

Hinsdale Central High School

Thursday, September 27, 2012

7:00 p.m.

Since both entities are currently dispatched by Southwest Central Dispatch, would the cost be reduced if the consolidation went through? Would it be cut in half, quartered, or in 1/3? Or would it remain the same?

Southwest Central Dispatch (SWCD) police department dispatch fees are based on a per officer rate of \$10,500. The current consolidation model reduces the total number of sworn positions by approximately five, resulting in a total savings of \$52,000. This cost savings is factored into the current overall savings projections.

Which police building would be the police operations center? The current Hinsdale or Clarendon Hills buildings?

The current plan is to keep both buildings open with the facilities being part of the long-term discussion. The consolidated department could then review its capital and operational needs to determine the best course of action.

What would the new police consolidation agency call itself? Examples?

No name has been agreed upon, however the working title for the agency has been the Hinsdale Clarendon Hills Police Department.

How would the police districts be handled? By primary village or by population, crime statistics or demographics?

The police beats have not been discussed. The current configuration in both communities uses the railroad tracks as they can create a natural division. This would be decided at a later date.

Do you have a design for police cars, logos and emblems? What about uniforms, equipment and badge design?

The design for a consolidated department logo has not been established. The two communities are focusing on the legal and operational aspects to determine whether the consolidation can occur prior to making these types of decisions.

How will the Chief be hired?

The proposal includes establishing a Joint Law Enforcement Committee that would include representatives from both Village Boards and Village Managers. The Chief of the consolidated agency would be hired by that Committee.

Hinsdale has a large Deputy Chief position – will that be changed?

The proposed consolidated department structure includes two deputy chiefs that would have day-to-day oversight of two different aspects of the operation.

Will Hinsdale control the merged departments?

One of the primary goals of the study was local control and autonomy, meaning an equal partnership of both communities. Both communities agree to approach this venture as a partnership of two equal partners, not simply a take-over of one department by another. The governing board would have equal votes from Clarendon Hills and Hinsdale.

I have concerns in the following areas: Local control and autonomy, priorities, chief hiring and firing, promotions, allocation of personnel, Police and Fire Commissioners, compensation and pension, local ordinances.

The two communities are working on legislative action to allow for a joint Board of Police Commissioners, and the Joint Law Enforcement Board would oversee the hiring and firing of the Chief and the department in general. The Chief would oversee the hiring and firing of other civilian and non-tested positions. The other personnel issues would be determined through the collective bargaining process with the unions. The Villages have made a commitment to not laying off current employees or adversely impacting employees' pensions.

Will this be put to a vote through referendum?

No, a referendum question is not currently being proposed. Both communities are working closely with stakeholders to address various aspects of the consolidation and to solicit public feedback.

What percentage of savings is attributable to Hinsdale and Clarendon Hills?

The exact division of costs for the consolidated department has not yet been determined, but will be outlined as part of the intergovernmental agreement.

Why would there be a need for two deputy chiefs in a smaller consolidated department? When cost saving is what this entire process is about, this is a questionable decision.

The consolidated department organization chart depicts one Deputy Chief overseeing a number of sworn patrol officers and a second Deputy Chief overseeing fewer sworn positions in investigations and school resource positions. The chart does not depict the number of non-sworn personnel, including records staff and crossing guards, that the second deputy chief would oversee. Each position would have a significant amount of work to oversee and the Chiefs of both communities believe it is necessary for the successful operation of the consolidated organization.

How will you address the issue of Hinsdale being an accredited department and Clarendon Hills not?

The issue of accreditation would be handled as part of the process of standardizing the policies and procedures of each department.

Will the student resource officer be for both Hinsdale and Clarendon Hills schools?

The student resource officer currently services Hinsdale Central High School, which serves both Clarendon Hills and Hinsdale. The school currently pays for the officer to be at the high school, and it is expected that that arrangement would continue.

Money savings aside, why would Clarendon Hills attach themselves to a financially irresponsible Village like Hinsdale?

The Village of Clarendon Hills would not enter into such a partnership with a community that it believed was financially irresponsible or did not have aligned interests. Both communities have considered each other's financial conditions and considered carefully whether the consolidation continues to be in the best interest of their respective communities. At this time, leaders in both communities are committed to continuing to study the feasibility and receive public input.

Will the new department have the officers contribute to Social Security?

Currently, Clarendon Hills officers contribute to Social Security but Hinsdale officers do not. Clarendon Hills is working with the State and Federal Social Security Administrations to determine the issues related to Social Security, but no decision has been made.

What recourse is there in the event the consolidation happens and is found not to be a well working department and doesn't work?

A provision for separating the two departments would be outline in the intergovernmental agreement to ensure there is a method to dissolve if that is the desire of future Boards. However, both communities are entering this process with the commitment to go forward only if it meets the needs of the communities after a thorough review of the issues, not as a "trial run."

What is "Plan B" for each Village in the event the consolidation is not feasible?

The communities do not have a current "Plan B." See answer above regarding dissolve the department. If there are barriers to initiating the consolidation, the two communities would continue to operate separate departments.

What happens if the staffing study is inaccurate and it is necessary to increase the amount of officers? What would the savings be then?

If the proposed staffing is found to be inadequate or otherwise not meet the needs of the communities, adjustments would need to be made. However, the study is taking multiple review of the process in order to ensure that the numbers and the proposed organizational chart are correct.

Is the consolidation really just a way to have Clarendon Hills pay Hinsdale's bills? In 2006, Hinsdale was in a deficit, Clarendon Hills was not.

The proposal is an equal partnership between the two communities with each community realizing savings and sharing the operating costs in a proportional and equitable way. As part of this process both communities have looked at the other's financial condition and the intergovernmental agreement will be designed in such a way to ensure that financial obligations of the two partners are met.

How will the difference in pension liability be funded?

As a first step, each municipality is looking at its pension funding assumptions and working out the differences. Once the assumptions are aligned, the pension funding would be on a proportional basis. The two communities would carry their existing pension liabilities separately.

What cooperation is now in use between the two departments?

Both communities currently participate in a number of regional cooperative agencies, including FIAT, which provides investigative services for higher-level crimes, accident reconstruction and canine units; and both are members of Southwest Central Dispatch. The two communities provide backup to each other, however there are limits to what an officer can do in a neighboring jurisdiction. Area communities are currently working on a cooperative shooting range agreement.

What is Clarendon Hills saving?

The total savings is estimated to be between \$700,000 and \$800,000. How that share will be split up between the two communities has yet to be determined, but will be defined in the intergovernmental agreement.

Why can't a group of towns agree to standardize procedures now so sharing is easier? If they did so, they could decide to merge later will Villages who were successful at standardizing. This allows time to work on the relationships and standardize for one to two years before experimenting with consolidation.

The original study between four communities looked at ways to share services that would result in cost savings. A major hurdle to that proposal was the need to standardize policies and procedures. The level of effort and time necessary to standardize policies and procedures would be very high, with significant costs and little return. Consolidation requires the same process of standardizing procedures and policies, but provides a greater financial benefit through reduced operating cost of the police department by reducing administrative positions.