

Westcomm Operations Committee

Meeting Minutes

March 10, 2026 at 9am

Westcomm, 645 Shawinigan Drive, Chicopee MA

Also on Google Meet

Committee Members (and alternates) Present: Chicopee Fire: Chief Dan Stamborski, Deputy Chief Doug Sanford; Chicopee Police: Chief Eric Watson, Captain Doug Lambert; East Longmeadow Fire: Chief Chris Beecher; East Longmeadow Police: Chief Mark Williams; Longmeadow Fire: Chief John Rigney; Longmeadow Police: Chief Robert Stocks, Captain Carl Mazzaferro; Monson Fire: Chief Brian Harris; Monson Police: Chief Nick Gasperini; Ware Fire: Chief James Martinez; Ware Police: Chief Shawn Crevier

Westcomm: Deputy Director Anthony Massoia; Operations Manager Greg Wallace; IT Director Grant Herman; IT Assistant Michael Meaney

Guests: Tyler Allen, Goosetown Communications

Chair Brian Harris opened the meeting at 9:05am.

The Operations Committee was directed by the Board of Directors to discuss the proposed new agreement with the Hampden County Sheriffs Department and its potential impacts on Westcomm's operations. To prepare for the discussion and improve efficiency and facilitation of the discussion, the following questions were provided in writing to Deputy Director Massoia and the other committee members one day prior to this meeting. Deputy Director Massoia answered the questions in the meeting as follows:

1. Financial Terms and Assessments

Question: What is the proposed start date and the term (duration) of the agreement?

Response: The proposed start date is July 1, 2026, with the term governed by the existing District Agreement.

Question: What is the proposed annual assessment for the Sheriff's Department?

Response: The proposed annual assessment is \$299,086.60.

Question: How was the initial assessment calculated?

Response: The calculation includes:

- Approximately 15% share of facility costs
- Estimated radio facility site maintenance costs (six sites)

- Funding for four dispatcher salaries

It was noted that State 911 funding does not reimburse dispatch services for sheriff's departments, requiring these staffing costs to be included in the assessment.

Question: What is the formula for calculating the assessment in subsequent years?

Response: A set formal formula has not yet been determined.

2. Governance and Leadership

Question: Will the Sheriff personally hold a seat on the Board of Directors?

Response: Yes. The Sheriff or a designee will hold a single seat.

Question: Will the Sheriff personally hold a seat on the Operations Committee?

Response: Yes. The Sheriff or a designee will hold a single seat.

Question: How does adding a single seat to the Operations Committee affect the voting balance between Police and Fire disciplines?

Response: The addition results in one additional vote aligned with police representation.

Question: Do current members have concerns regarding this shift in voting balance?

Discussion: None were expressed by the group. It was noted that votes are often unanimous, and each discipline respects the other to decide on matters exclusive to their operations.

3. Operational Impact

Question: Will Westcomm dispatch for more HCSO personnel and specialty units than they currently do under the present agreement?

Response: No. Dispatch responsibilities will remain unchanged from current operations under the present agreement.

Question: Will Westcomm provide dispatching for personnel working inside correctional facilities?

Response: No. The agreement applies only to the Law Enforcement Division and Civil Process Division.

Question: Will dispatcher staffing levels be increased to accommodate this change? What about support or supervisory positions?

Response: Dispatch staffing minimums will not be changed. No additional support staff or supervisory positions are anticipated in direct relation to this agreement.

Question: Will the Sheriff have a dedicated dispatcher or share a dispatcher with another agency?

Response:

- HCSO dispatch was originally shared with a dispatcher assigned to Chicopee Police.
- That changed, and now the Sheriff dispatching is shared with the towns' police dispatcher.
- Once the center reaches full staffing levels, a third dispatcher position will be present manage overflow for both police and fire, and also will assist with Sheriff activity as needed.

Dispatchers funded through HCSO assessments will not be dedicated exclusively to the Sheriff's Office use, but will support overall operations for all member agencies.

Question: Will Westcomm answer administrative phone lines for the Sheriff's Department?

Response: No.

Question: When deputies work in communities that are not Westcomm members, are there concerns about dispatch workload?

Response: When deputies work in communities under contract with the Sheriff (such as Palmer most recently), that local dispatch center handles communications. When deputies conduct other activities (such as traffic enforcement grants in West Springfield), their dispatch services are handled by Westcomm.

Question: Is Westcomm responsible for CJIS record entries, audits, or related responsibilities?

Response: HCSO's OpenFox system will be combined with Westcomm's system, and Westcomm will assist with CJIS audit responsibilities. This is similar to what is done now with municipal police departments.

4. Systems and State Funding

Question: Will the Sheriff be required to join the Westcomm radio network, or can they maintain their present radio system?

Response: HCSO is already part of the Westcomm network. The prior agreement called for Westcomm to construct or enhance a six-site radio system for HCSO. The proposed new agreement would upgrade the HCSO sites and the Ware site to trunked radio operation.

Question: Will Westcomm members share in the cost of maintaining the Sheriff's radio system?

Response: Yes. The system is currently part of the Westcomm network.

Question: Are there equipment needs specific to the Sheriff's radio system?

Response: Additional trunking licenses will be required.

Question: Who is responsible for funding future system needs?

Response: Westcomm will maintain the system infrastructure. HCSO will continue its separate contract with Goosetown Communications and will fund its own radio equipment replacement and upgrades.

Question: Will the Sheriff operate on their own radio channel or share one with other agencies?

Response: HCSO will operate on its own channel. Until they move from the conventional system they are on now to the trunked system, sharing a channel is difficult.

Question: What CAD and RMS systems does HCSO use?

Response: RMS is Mark43, CAD implementation is believed to be Mark43 as well but is currently delayed.

Question: Will HCSO be required to switch to Hexagon CAD or RMS?

Response: Not at this time.

Question: Who will pay for the HCSO CAD/RMS systems?

Response: HCSO will pay for its own systems. Responsibility for funding a future migration to Hexagon, if desired, has not yet been determined.

Question: How does the Sheriff's inclusion affect State 911 funding for Westcomm?

Response: HCSO is not eligible for State 911 funding, so their inclusion will not change funding calculations, or decrease it. Municipal member assessments are expected to decrease if the agreement proceeds.

5. Changes from the Current Agreement

Question: What substantive changes will result from the proposed agreement compared to the current agreement?

Response:

- Increased funding for Westcomm operations
- Infrastructure improvements
- Reduced municipal assessments
- No significant change expected in operational workload for any Westcomm staff

6. Committee Questions and Comments

Several additional concerns and comments were raised by committee members:

- Members emphasized the importance of establishing a clear assessment formula to address potential increases in HCSO staffing, activity levels, or call volume. Concern was expressed that the Sheriff's Office could expand operations or increase dispatch activity after the agreement is signed, potentially creating additional workload without corresponding funding adjustments. It was suggested that the next updated District Agreement include this.
- Some members noted the inequities in radio channel allocation, as some municipal agencies are forced to share radio channels while the HCSO would operate on its own channel. It is believed that the prospect of sharing a radio channel may have significantly affected the decision of a local community to choose a different regional dispatch provider.
- Members asked whether State 911 grant funding could be broken down by municipality to determine how much each community contributes when both grant funding and assessments are considered.
- Committee members also questioned whether the proposed \$299,000 assessment adequately covers the cost of four dispatchers, noting that the estimate appears to include starting salaries only and not benefits or full employment costs.

7. Follow-Up Items

- Anthony will share the assessment calculation methodology used to determine the proposed HCSO assessment with the committee.
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District Agreement Changes:

The Committee decided to appoint a “task force” to evaluate current District Agreement, as well as review others, and report back to the full committee with any suggested changes. The Board of Directors has asked for the other Westcomm committees to provide their input on this by the end of May. The Board discussed appointing their own subcommittee made up of Operations and Finance Committee members to work on this, but they haven’t done that yet, so Chief Williams recommended that Operations form their own group now to start working on this review. Chiefs Williams, Harris, Deputy Chief Sanford, and Captain Lambert volunteered to serve on this task force. Chief Martinez also volunteered to help with this (via email after the meeting had adjourned).

Deputy Director Massoia shared that he had just learned last night that Mission Critical had released their scores following their statewide review and assessments of all of the regional centers. In this assessment, the national average score for regional centers is 5.04. The Massachusetts statewide average is 7.65. Westcomm received a higher score than both of 8.43. These results are in draft form, and there were some clarifications requested on Westcomm specifically, so it is possible that the score will increase even more in the final report.

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting, motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 10:15am.

Respectfully Submitted,



Mark A. Williams

Vice Chair