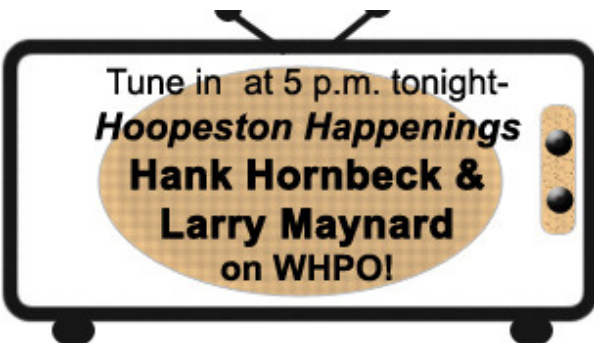


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Email: publish@justthefacts.net Phone/Fax: (217) 283-9348
Just the Facts Lourdine Florek, Owner
Thursday, September 22, 2016
Hoopeston's only locally-owned daily news publication!
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Change in police dispatching from city to county going well

The change in emergency dispatching for Hoopeston Police Department is going well, according to police and fire department spokesmen.

Starting September 12, all of Hoopeston police, fire and emergency medical services (EMS) calls have been dispatched through Vermilion County.

Both Hoopeston Fire Chief Joel Bird and Hoopeston Police Sgt. James DeWitt said their departments have experienced only a few minor glitches that were quickly resolved.

The biggest challenge may come in getting Hoopeston and Rossville residents to dial new numbers for emergency services.

In fact, resident participation is key to the success of the change. Citizens are asked to give complete information when they call police, including the correct address and whether it is a street or avenue. "That's very important," DeWitt said. "The calmer you can stay and the more information you can give will be very helpful."

Dispatchers have also been trained to ask for that information, he said.

For emergencies, residents are asked to call 911, which automatically go to Vermilion County. Before the change, only cell phone 911 calls went to the county dis-

patching center, but those amounted to about 85 percent of total Hoopeston 911 calls.

For non-emergency service calls, residents are asked to call (217) 442-0153, which also goes directly to Danville. These types of calls could include things like reporting incidents where lives and property are not at stake, such

See DISPATCHING on other side

Clip & Save

Police Calling Numbers
Emergency:
911
Non-emergency service calls:
(217) 442-0153
HPD administration, records:
(217) 283-5196
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Registration deadline September 23, 2016

Grant Writing 101
Saturday, October 1 from 9a-5p
Class fee \$65
Registration deadline September 26, 2016

Grant Writing 102
Saturday, October 8 from 9a-5p
Class fee \$65
Registration deadline October 3, 2016

Excel 2013 - Level 1
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Class fee \$96
Registration deadline October 5, 2016

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Call 217-283-4170, stop by 847 E. Orange, Hoopeston
or visit www.dacc.edu/hoopeston

Dispatching continued from other side

as a stolen item or an illegal burn. Calls to Hoopeston Police Department's non-emergency number, 283-5196, will be answered and transferred to Danville.

Dispatchers will still be available at the police station to answer administrative questions and provide records.

The way in which a call comes from a resident and gets to an officer will not change significantly. A call to 911 or the Danville number will result in a Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) ticket being generated. The CAD ticket will contain initial information given and further information as it becomes available. Calls to the Hoopeston non-emergency number will result in CAD ticket being generated when the call is transferred to Vermilion County.

All calls will be prioritized and dispatched accordingly, DeWitt said. "If it's not a priority call, it may take more time," he said. Despite that, "we will respond immediately as soon as we get the call. Our service is going to be to the best of our standards."

The decision to change from local to county dispatching was made for a couple of reasons.

First, although Hoopeston and Vermilion County acted as backups for each other's 911 systems for decades, more than \$100,000 in upgrades to Hoopeston's equipment would have been necessary for the arrangement to continue DeWitt said.

Second, the state's 911 system, originally under the Illinois Commerce Commission, was turned over to the Illinois State Police, which was already in the process of consolidating its own dispatching centers.

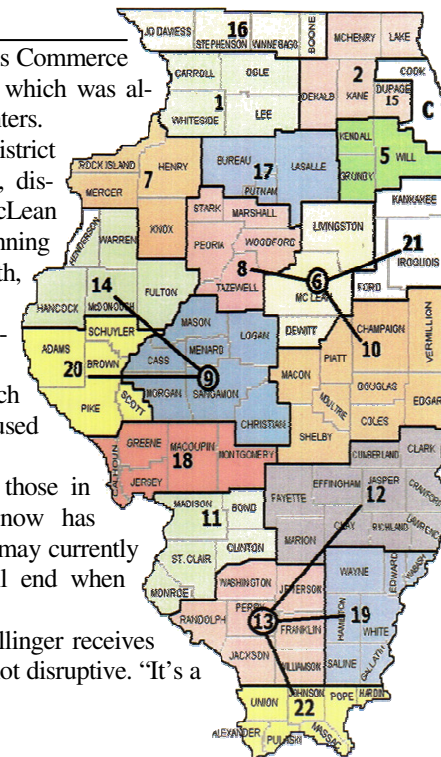
Previously, each ISP district did its own dispatching. District 10, based in Pesotum, which includes Vermilion County, dispatched to all its counties. (See map). Now, District 6 in McLean County dispatches its calls, and Districts 10, 8 and 21, spanning counties from Vermilion on the east, Shelby on the south, Peoria to the West and Kankakee to the north.

Champaign County's METCAD is now serving as Vermilion County's backup.

Original plans called for Hoopeston to continue to dispatch non-emergency traffic, but DeWitt said that would have caused confusion between Hoopeston and Vermilion County.

The biggest drawback to the consolidation will be to those in "scannerland," as former Chief Orval Kaag called it. HPD now has digital which are not picked up by scanners. Local activity may currently be heard on Vermilion County's frequency but that will end when county radios are switched to digital.

DeWitt, has overseen the change while Chief Mark Drollinger receives treatment for an illness, admits nobody likes change but is not disruptive. "It's a change," he said. It's not a major change."



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