



Disaster and Fire Safety Commission

INFORMATION CALENDAR

January 29, 2008

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
 From: Disaster and Fire Safety Commission
 Submitted by: Gil Dong, Secretary, Disaster and Fire Safety Commission
 Subject: SMART 911

INTRODUCTION

On September 11, 2007, Councilmember Capitelli requested that the Disaster and Fire Safety Commission hear a presentation from Alan North about SMART 911 and report back to the City Council on their findings and recommendations. The Commission heard a presentation on October 24, 2007 and further discussed the item on December 5, 2007, at which time it made the following motion:

Moved by Jesse Townley, seconded by Roger Sharpe, to forward to Council a recommendation not to proceed with implementing the SMART 911 program at this time. The Commission encourages the City of Berkeley to reevaluate the SMART 911 system as well as other comparable systems when the implementation of the new Computer Aided Dispatch System is complete. Motion carried unanimously.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

SMART 911 is a private, commercial venture located in Berkeley, that has developed a mechanism that would allow residents to use the Internet to pre-store critical care information about their home and family on a secure database. That information would automatically be made available to 9-1-1 call centers during emergencies.

BACKGROUND

On October 24, 2007 staff members from the Fire Department, Police Department and Office of Information Technology attended Mr. North's presentation to the Disaster and Fire Safety Commission.

The Berkeley Police Department is in the initial stages of transitioning to a new Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) System. This transition represents a total change in the way the Police Department does business in the Communications Center, as well as a change in how all emergency calls are dispatched. Staff members do not support the idea of implementing the SMART 911 program before the new CAD system is in place.

In addition, staff have reservations regarding SMART 911 being a for profit company, since similar services are currently available at no charge. Other concerns include

potential liability issues and the security and privacy of health data, as regulated by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).

POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION

The Commission encourages the City of Berkeley to reevaluate the SMART911 system, as well as other comparable systems, when the implementation of the new Computer Aided Dispatch System is complete.

CONTACT PERSON

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