



COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
APRIL 22, 2013
5:30 PM

Opening of Meeting

Nondenominational Invocation

Roll Call

Approval/Amendments to Agenda

1. Adopt: Resolution opposing Governor McCrory and the General Assembly closing and consolidating North Carolina Highway Patrol Communications Centers (**page 2**)
2. Discussion: Budget: General Fund Overview
3. Closed Session –Under § NCGS 143-318.11(a)(6) Personnel
4. Adjourn – Until Thursday, April 25, 2013 at 5:30pm in the Council Chambers at the Municipal Building.



City of Washington
REQUEST FOR CITY COUNCIL ACTION

To: Mayor Jennings & Members of the City Council
From: Joshua Kay, City Manager
Date: April 17, 2013
Subject: Adopt Resolution Opposing the Closing of NC Highway Patrol Communications Centers
Applicant Presentation: N/A
Staff Presentation: N/A

RECOMMENDATION:

I move that the City Council adopt a Resolution opposing Governor McCrory and the General Assembly closing and consolidating North Carolina Highway Patrol Communications Centers

BACKGROUND AND FINDINGS:

Governor McCrory’s proposed budget calls for the closure of the North Carolina Highway Patrol Troop A Communications Center, located in Williamston and the termination of most of its staff. Centers in Greensboro and Asheville are also slated for closure under the proposal. This resolution requests that our State legislators maintain Troop A Communications in Williamston as well as centers in Asheville and Greensboro in order to preserve this valuable local resource in and around our community.

PREVIOUS LEGISLATIVE ACTION

N/A

FISCAL IMPACT

Currently Budgeted (Account _____) Requires additional appropriation No Fiscal Impact

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Resolution & Letter

City Attorney Review: _____ Date By: _____ (if applicable)
Finance Dept Review: _____ Date By: _____ (if applicable)
City Manager Review: _____ Date Concur _____ Recommend Denial _____ No recommendation _____

Mayor
Archie Jennings

City Manager
Joshua L. Kay



Washington City Council

Richard Brooks
Doug Mercer
Edward Moultrie
William Pitt
Bobby Roberson

RESOLUTION
OPPOSING GOVERNOR MCCRORY AND THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY CLOSING
AND CONSOLIDATING NC HIGHWAY PATROL COMMUNICATIONS CENTERS

WHEREAS, Governor Pat McCrory proposes closing three of eight NC Highway Patrol Communications Centers and consolidating them with the Raleigh office; and

WHEREAS, in an effort to control costs, plans are to close the NC Highway Patrol Communications Centers in Williamston, as well as stations in Asheville and Greensboro; and

WHEREAS, the State Highway Patrol has more than 1,600 troopers who cover 78,000 miles in North Carolina roadways, enforcing the state's traffic laws, guiding traffic during hurricane evacuations, rerouting traffic around hazardous chemical spills, and standing ready, should any act of terrorism occur; and

WHEREAS, the Williamston Highway Patrol Communications Center (Troop A), alone, processes 600 incoming calls daily (219,000 annually), serves 20 counties (Martin, Pitt, Beaufort, Washington, Tyrrell, Hyde, Dare, Currituck, Jones, Lenoir, Carteret, Craven, Pamlico, Hertford, Bertie, Gates, Chowan, Perquimans, Pasquotank, Camden) and dispatches to 180 troopers; and

WHEREAS, the Williamston Highway Patrol Communications Center has been remodeled and upgraded to house the latest equipment and technology; and

WHEREAS, the Williamston Highway Patrol Communication Center is a key employment center for our neighboring community; and

WHEREAS, although it has been suggested revenue may be saved through consolidation, a higher turnover of state jobs often occur in metropolitan areas, and the consolidation could actually end-up costing more, due to personnel costs associated with employee turnover rates; and

WHEREAS, there is the concern that lives will be lost, due to delayed response time caused by operators in a communication center centralized in Raleigh becoming overloaded and being unfamiliar with the area.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the City Council of the City of Washington strongly appeals to Governor McCrory to reconsider his recommendation to members of the General Assembly to close the NC Highway Patrol communications centers in Williamston as well as in Asheville and Greensboro to balance the state budget.

ADOPTED, this the 22nd day of April 2013.

Attest:

Cynthia S. Bennett, CMC
City Clerk

N. Archie Jennings, III
Mayor



North Carolina Department of Public Safety

State Highway Patrol

Pat McCrory, Governor
Kieran J. Shanahan, Secretary

Colonel William Grey
Commander

TROOP A COMMUNICATIONS CENTER

16 APRIL 2013

Mr. Joshua L. Kay, City Manager:

The North Carolina State Highway Patrol, Troop A Communications Center, located in Williamston NC, serves the public, officers, and the local allied law enforcement community in the northeastern sector of the State. Troop A Communications is responsible for dispatch, call taking (emergency and administrative), record-keeping, statistics, certain re-certifications, and a myriad of other duties as required 24 hours per day, 7 days per week for the following counties: Beaufort, Bertie, Camden, Carteret, Chowan, Craven, Currituck, Dare, Gates, Hertford, Hyde, Jones, Lenoir, Martin, Pamlico, Pasquotank, Perquimans, Pitt, Tyrrell, and Washington.

As partners in public safety and service to local citizens, I wanted to reach out to you and ask for your assistance in preventing a proposed action that will do great damage to officer and public safety in your area.

The Governor's proposed budget, released late last month, included devastating news for the Highway Patrol's Communications division. This budget calls for the closure of the Troop A Communications Center and the termination of most of the staff. Centers in Greensboro and Asheville are also slated for closure under this proposal. Calls for emergency and non-emergency assistance from your area (officers, public, and otherwise) would be shifted to an already overburdened and short-staffed SHP Communications Center in Raleigh with nearly no additional staff to handle them.

What this means for you is this: Longer response times, more limited access and slower activation of the VIPER network if needed, calls for emergency and non-emergency assistance being answered by a Telecommunicator responsible for a MUCH larger area than before who has most likely not even visited your area, and (most importantly) the possibility of an officer getting injured or worse due to an overworked and overloaded Communications Center.

Any assistance you can provide to help preserve this valuable local resource for the citizens in your area would be most appreciated.

MAILING ADDRESS:
4231 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-4231
www.ncdps.gov
www.ncshp.org



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Raleigh, NC 27604
Telephone: (919) 733-7952
Fax: (919) 715-4059



North Carolina Department of Public Safety

State Highway Patrol

Pat McCrory, Governor
Kieran J. Shanahan, Secretary

Colonel William Grey
Commander

Page 2

Please feel free to contact me or a member of my staff with any questions.

Most Respectfully Submitted,

Jason Paul Steward
Telecommunications Center Supervisor
NC Department of Public Safety
State Highway Patrol-Troop A Communications Center
4003 West Main Street
Williamston, North Carolina 27892-8825
(252) 792-4101
(252) 217-4671 (cell)
Jason.steward@ncdps.gov

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Page 5 of 5

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Raleigh, NC 27604
Telephone: (919) 733-7952
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