

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:

Karen Larimore Wilkinson, PIO
Director of Public Information & Communications
City of Salisbury
City Hall, 217 South Main Street
Salisbury, North Carolina 28144
Work Phone: 704-638-2113
Cell Phone: 704-213-1050
Information: <http://www.salisburync.gov>
Work Email Contact: kwilk@salisburync.gov

City of Salisbury Requests Study Group and Offers the Use of Salisbury Police Department for County Interim Primary Public Safety Access Point

*Study Group Requested to Move 911 Dispatch Discussions Forward
Location Offered to County at No Cost for Duration of Consolidation Feasibility Study*

Salisbury, NC – October 14, 2011_In a letter addressed to County Manager Gary Page, Salisbury Interim City Manager Paris states that his goal in the coming weeks is “to move the 911 dispatch discussions in a positive direction for all Rowan County citizens.” Paris adds, “While I have full faith in your ability to solve this issue with me, at this time I am requesting that we form a study group to move this item forward. This group would include our participation along with the participation of our respective elected officials.”

In addition, Paris has offered available space at the Salisbury Police Department as an interim location for the Rowan County’s primary Public Safety Access Point (PSAP). The second floor area, which is currently vacant, is available for future municipal public safety growth and is offered to Rowan County at no cost. The correspondence offers Page the use of the Salisbury Police Department for the duration of the consolidation feasibility study, as requested by Salisbury City Council.

Paris uplifts the offer as “a win/win” that would allow the following accomplishments:

- Allow space for Rowan County’s new equipment and/or staff, to address previously discussed space limitations
- Offer a temporary site for 911 dispatch to remain operational while the City of Salisbury and Rowan County jointly pursue a consolidation feasibility study to ensure that consolidation will in fact improve public safety delivery and result in recently discussed savings
- Allow Rowan County to apply for state funding during the next grant round to pay for a permanent primary PSAP and save the county \$1.2 million in tax funds
- Allow the \$1.2 million in tax funds to be utilized for other public safety radio needs or roll off the books early
- Allow the \$500,000 in 911 reserve funds (as allowed by legislation) to be spent on pressing needs (including the cost of the consolidation feasibility study) instead of on the building

- As both County and City Dispatch would be located in the same facility for an interim period, it would allow a real life test of the co-location concept and provide valuable experience and feedback before capital expenditures are made

Paris notes to Page, "As I have shared earlier, Rockingham County and Burke County have received \$15 million in 911 funds for this use. Further, our citizens have already paid into this fund, so it makes sense to pursue it." Paris adds that discussions with City staff have also offered several ideas on how the \$1.2 million in tax funds "could be better spent to benefit the public safety community."

Paris offers, "While the last two weeks have been challenging, this is an opportunity for the City of Salisbury and Rowan County to work together for the benefit of both the taxpayers and the public safety community. I understand this would be a deviation from your existing plans, but the offer is worth merit and the potential benefits are sizable. Further, I understand that our available space may not be as ideal as an immediate move into a brand new building with built-in room for growth; however, we feel it will be adequate for your five dispatch positions and six console stations in the interim until the study can be completed, and at which time state funds can be utilized to fully pay for and build the ideal facility."

In his conclusion, Paris shares, "It would be appropriate for the future study group to explore this offer in more detail and discuss other potential solutions that Rowan County may prefer. I would expect such discussions to be very productive and result in an excellent result. The City of Salisbury will discuss the above request and offer Tuesday at the Salisbury City Council meeting. I would ask that Rowan County consider discussing both the request and offer on Monday at your meeting."

The City of Salisbury is an equal opportunity employer with over 180 different job classifications and more than 400 full-time positions. For more information regarding the City of Salisbury and its services and departments, please visit us on the web at www.salisburync.gov. To receive updates regarding local initiatives, meetings, programs, and events, please join the City of Salisbury's Facebook users group at www.salisburync.gov/facebook or follow us on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/CitySalisburyNC>.

###