



ARTHUR G. PAPPAS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Mayor Pappas Issues Statement on Police Dispatch Matter

NORTH TONAWANDA—North Tonawanda Mayor Arthur G. Pappas issued the following statement in response to media and public inquiries regarding a North Tonawanda Police union proposal to separate the City from the County's modernized central dispatch system:

North Tonawanda Mayor Pappas said, "The Common Council and I received a proposal from the PBA to bring dispatch—with its personnel and equipment costs—back to North Tonawanda. In addition to the proposal, the PBA also launched a public relations campaign criticizing the dispatch service utilized throughout Niagara County.

In light of the PBA's assertions about the countywide dispatch system, and their allegations that it did not satisfy the public safety needs of our City, an inquiry was initiated and several meetings were held with Niagara County Sheriff James R. Voutour and his staff, North Tonawanda Police Chief Bill Hall, County Attorney staff, the North Tonawanda City Attorney, the members of the PBA, and myself. The main purpose of these conversations was safety: both of our police officers and of the public.

These meetings were held at the County's dispatch center and in North Tonawanda, and all parties were able to speak openly about concerns. Sheriff Voutour satisfied the Common Council and I that safety concerns presented have been properly addressed and do not present any danger to our officers or our residents. Had that not been the case, we would be taking a markedly different stance today.

Cost was always a secondary, but not overlooked issue. I will be blunt! We determined the cost of bringing local dispatch back to North Tonawanda and sufficiently modernizing our equipment was so excessive, even with PBA proposed concessions, it could not be sustained over the long haul, while still producing responsible budgets respectful of our citizen taxpayers. As it stands now, the City does not have the licensing or the equipment and are completely unprepared to handle dispatch.

In closing, our City government has concluded our County dispatch services are meeting the residents' needs and no change at this time is the most responsible course. We thank all parties for their candor during discussions, as well as their time and effort to present options to consider."

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