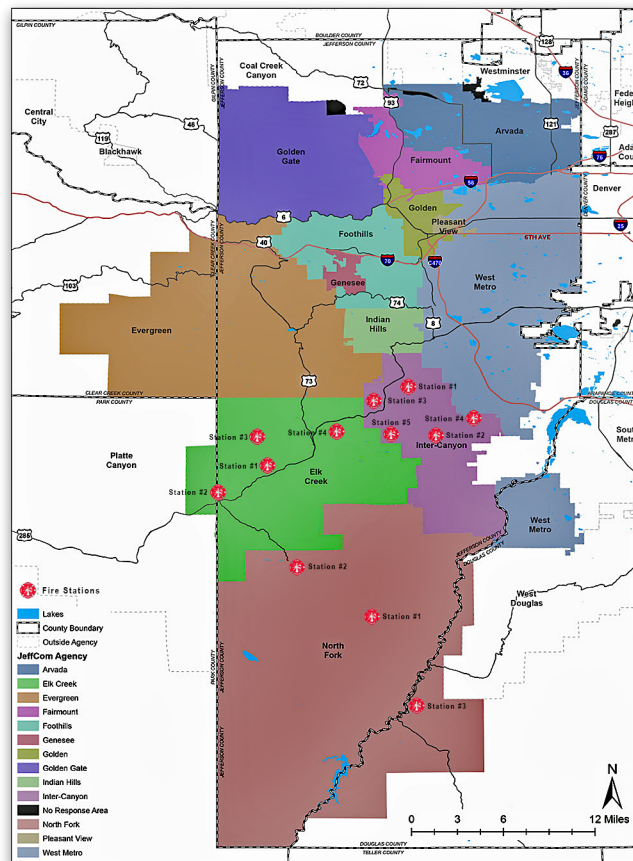


## EXPLAINER: THE JEFFCOM911 COMPUTER AIDED DISPATCH SYSTEM

**IS THE COMMUNITY RISKING DISASTER?** Even though their Consolidation Plan was soundly rejected by a 51% AGAINST vs 49% FOR vote in a November 2023 ballot election, by loudly proclaiming that, *"WE'VE BEEN WORKING ON LUCK. .... WE'RE BARELY COVERING OUR CALLS. .... WE'RE NOT EVEN COORDINATED!"* and then, *"LOOK AT THE CALL ACUITY... .... WE'RE ONE CALL AWAY FROM DISASTER. ABSOLUTELY!"* (URBAN "INTERVIEW" OF SHIRLAW AT [9M:12S]), the Fire Chiefs of [Elk Creek](#), [Inter-Canyon](#), and [North Fork](#) Fire Protection Districts (FPDs) believe that they will eventually force their unlawful plan for "Unification" on our mountain community.<sup>1 2</sup>

Let us examine these statements critically by first noting the very different geographies and demographics of the three fire districts, see Figure 1 below plus the [Consolidation Explainer](#):

- Elk Creek FPD (**green**) serves a population of ~17,000 residents, encompass 98 sq-mi, has three firefighter/EMT 24/7 crews operating out of Station 1, and operates with an annual budget of \$7M.
- Inter-Canyon FPD (**purple**) serves ~5,250 residents, encompasses 52 sq-mi, has no 24/7 service, and operates with an annual budget of \$2.23M.
- North Fork FPD (**brown**) serves ~1,700 residents, encompasses 240 sq-mi, has no 24/7 service, and operates with an annual budget of \$657K.



**Figure 1:** The consolidated/merged Elk Creek, Inter-Canyon, and North Fork FPDs—to be rebranded "The Conifer Fire Department"—would encompass nearly 400 sq-mi of Jefferson, Douglas, and Park Counties, source [Jeffcom911 GIS](#).

**AN IN-DEPTH LOOK AT THE NARRATIVE REGARDING EMERGENCY DISPATCH ADVANCED  
BY  
THE FIRE DISTRICT BOARDS OF DIRECTORS AND THE FIRE CHIEFS**

**"ONE CALL GOES TO EVERYBODY IN THE UNIFIED DISTRICT!" (WOODS, RESOLUTION 2024-09 HEARING AT [01H:15M:12S])** At the November 21, 2024 Elk Creek Board of Directors Hearing on the Resolution and Order of Exclusion—between time-codes [01H:12M:50] to [01H:15M:40S]—during discussion on the Motion to Approve, Director Sharon Woods advances a narrative that purports to describe as inadequate the Jeffcom911 emergency dispatch system that operates across the three fire districts (you can find the Zoom recording here: [Recording of Elk Creek FPD Exclusion Hearing](#)). Quoting at length from the Ms Woods narrative, the public is asked to believe that the present dispatch system is dangerously ineffectual:

- **"SO LET'S PAINT THE PICTURE, THERE'S AN ACCIDENT. .... IN TODAY'S WORLD, AN AMBULANCE IS DISPATCHED PROBABLY FROM THIS STATION [Elk Creek FPD Station 1]. .... BUT WAIT A MINUTE, ANOTHER CALL COMES IN, THERE'S ANOTHER ACCIDENT U.S.-285. .... SO A SECOND AMBULANCE GOES OUT ON CALL. .... THIS IS IN TODAY'S WORLD. THERE'S A NORTH FORK AMBULANCE GOING BACK TO THEIR STATION. .... THEY'RE COMING FROM SWEDISH, SO THEY'RE HEADED SOUTHBOUND ON U.S.-285. AND WHEN THAT CALL GOES INTO ELK CREEK FOR THAT ACCIDENT, THE NORTH FORK AMBULANCE DOESN'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT IT. AND THEY MIGHT SEE THE ACCIDENT ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE ROAD, BUT THEY'RE GOING TO GO RIGHT ON BY BECAUSE THEY WEREN'T CALLED. SO BY THE TIME THEY PUT THE MUTUAL AID CALL, THEY MIGHT ALREADY BE AT THEIR STATION, WHICH IS IN PINE, BUFFALO CREEK, THAT AREA."** [01H:12M:50S] to [01H:14M:45S]
- **"SO THIS IS THE WHOLE STORY THAT WE HEARD EARLIER WITH OVERLAPPING CALLS AND THE FACT THAT MUTUAL AID TAKES TIME."** [01H:14M:58S] to [01H:15M:05S]
- **"SO IN A UNIFIED DISTRICT, LET'S TALK ABOUT THAT SAME ACCIDENTS, TWO ACCIDENTS, RIGHT? ONE CALL GOES TO EVERYBODY IN THE UNIFIED DISTRICT. SO THAT AMBULANCE, IT'S DRIVING HOME FROM SWEDISH ON U.S.-285, THAT AMBULANCE KNOWS THERE'S AN ACCIDENT, THAT AMBULANCE KNOWS TO STOP WITH THAT ACCIDENT. SO 3 MINUTES TO THAT ACCIDENT INSTEAD OF 9 TO 12 MINUTES FOR THAT ACCIDENT."** [01H:15M:13S] to [01H:15M:40S]

To summarize, Ms Woods advances a disturbing narrative which asks the public to believe that the Jeffcom911 emergency dispatch system can be characterized as follows:

1. Emergency incident call responses, across fire districts, suffer from the lack of competent situational awareness, are poorly coordinated, and are ineffective;
2. Emergency incident call responses involving overlapping calls—those requiring mutual aid from adjacent fire districts—are unreasonably slow and cumbersome; and
3. "Unification" will create an operational model where **"ONE CALL GOES OUT TO EVERYBODY IN THE UNIFIED DISTRICT"** (WOODS) thus providing a robust remedy to these problems.

The very foundation of the Ms Woods false narrative is a mischaracterization of the way the Jeffcom911 Computer Dispatch System (CAD) operates, see below **"HOW THE JEFFCOM911 EMERGENCY DISPATCH SYSTEM ACTUALLY OPERATES"** for an operational overview of the system. From even a rudimentary understanding how the Jeffcom911 system operates, it is clear that the scenario painted by Ms Woods would never happen. In reality, the Jeffcom911

dispatch system is not broken, therefore, the claim by Ms Woods that only "Unification" can fix this dangerously broken system is verifiably false. Moreover, residents can be reassured that the Jeffcom911 CAD system is one of the most advanced, state-of-the-art dispatch systems of its kind in use anywhere in the U.S. and that, whenever anyone from within the the Jeffcom911 service area makes a call to 9-1-1—if that call requires the assistance of firefighter/EMS personnel it is already the case that, **"ONE CALL DOES GO OUT TO ALL OF THE FIREFIGHTER/EMT PERSONNEL ON-DUTY AT THE RESPONDING FIRE DISTRICTS WHO ARE LISTENING TO THE JEFFCOM911 DISPATCH CHANNEL!"**

## HOW THE JEFFCOM911 EMERGENCY DISPATCH SYSTEM ACTUALLY OPERATES

As can be seen in Figure 2, from the moment a 9-1-1 call is received, the Jeffcom911<sup>3</sup> dispatcher instantly has a 360° view of the incident, including:

- Location of the Incident Caller,
- Emergent Understanding of the Priority of the Incident, and
- Location of Firefighting/EMS Equipment, Personnel, & Resources.

For a better understanding of how the Jeffcom911 system functions end-to-end, see the following video: [Overview of the Jeffcom911 CAD System](#) and, for operational and organizational details, peruse this [2023 Jeffcom911 Annual Report](#).<sup>4</sup>



**Figure 2:** Dispatcher view of the Jeffcom911 CAD System.

***"WE ARE ONE CALL AWAY FROM DISASTER. ABSOLUTELY!" (URBAN "INTERVIEW" OF FIRE CHIEF SHIRLAW AT [9M:12S])*** During the 2024 "Unification" campaign, Board Members, the Fire Chiefs, and fire district personnel have repeatedly made a number of truly disturbing public statements. For example, in an "interview" conducted with Inter-Canyon FPD Fire Chief

Skip Shirlaw by PIO Bethany Urban, the Fire Chief—speaking on behalf of all three Fire Chiefs—states the following (the interview was originally posted to the Internet on August 17, 2024 but is archived here [Chief Shirlaw "Unification" Interview August 2024](#)):

- **"WE'VE BEEN WORKING ON LUCK. .... WE'RE BARELY COVERING OUR CALLS."** [6M:52S]
- **"WE'RE NOT EVEN COORDINATED..."** [7M:15S]
- **"LOOK AT THE CALL ACUITY... .... WE'RE ONE CALL AWAY FROM DISASTER!<sup>5</sup> ABSOLUTELY..."** [9M:55S] to [9M:12S]

Chief Shirlaw, speaking on behalf of all three Fire Chiefs in this interview and elsewhere, has vigorously advanced the disturbing narrative that, for the three fire districts:

1. Incident call volumes and call acuities have been increasing dramatically in past years;
2. Incident call communication are poorly coordinated, haphazard, and inefficient; and
3. "Unification" is the only way to solve these problems and protect our mountain community from imminent disaster.

Specifically, the narrative that Fire Chief Shirlaw advances on behalf of himself, Chief Ware, and Chief Rogers—is absolutely not true—the emergency call record tells the true story:

- **STAFFING PER THE EMERGENCY CALL VOLUMES AND ACUITIES AS LOGGED:**
  - Elk Creek FPD is well staffed for its call volume
  - Inter-Canyon FPD is appropriately staffed for its call volume
  - North Fork FPD is appropriately staffed for its call volume
- **VIA JEFFCOM911:** Elk Creek, Inter-Canyon, and North Fork FPDs are very well coordinated
- **PER JEFFCOM911 CALL LOG DATA FOR 2020 – 2024:** Emergency call volumes are down considerably and trending further downward for Elk Creek, Inter-Canyon, & North Fork FPDs
- **PER JEFFCOM911 CALL LOG DATA FOR 2020 – 2024:** Emergency call acuities are down and trending further downward for Elk Creek & Inter-Canyon FPDs but trending slightly upward for North Fork FPD

### **PER CALL RECORDS: FIRE DISTRICT 9-1-1 CALL VOLUMES AND ACUITIES ARE GENERALLY IN DECLINE FOR 2020 - 2024**

Emergency incident 9-1-1 call volume record data for the 2020 - 2024 period are presented below for each of the three fire districts, first in table form, then in graphical form. Similarly, call acuity rating data for Priority 1 and 2 call acuities—calls that are severe enough to warrant rolling fire and/or ambulance apparatus—are presented (see notes below for an explanation of call acuity classifications). This data was taken directly from Jeffcom911 monthly reports for January 2020 through December 2024, which are available here: [Jeffcom911 Monthly Reports](#). Additionally, emergency incident call data for the study period was taken from the Elk Creek FPD Chief's Report, published monthly.

### **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

Major findings of this study are that for the years 2020 - 2024 inclusive, Jeffcom911 call volume and acuity records for 9-1-1 calls inside the boundaries of Elk Creek, Inter-Canyon,

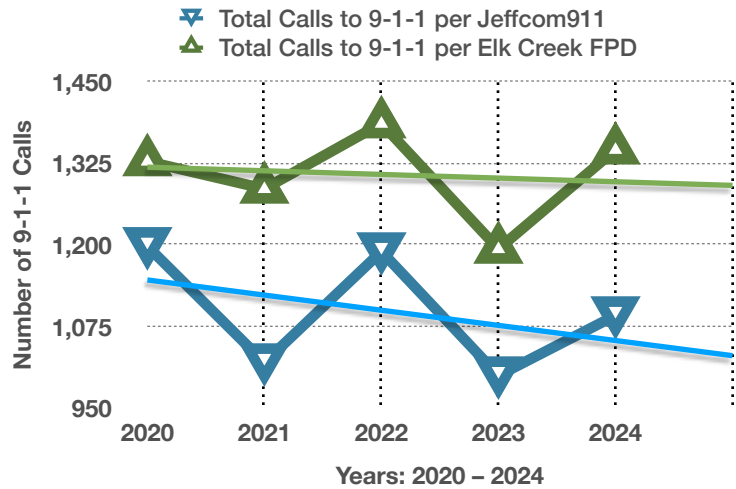
and North Fork FPDs were down significantly and that call acuities were also down for Elk Creek and Inter-Canyon FPDs; however, call acuities were up slightly for North Fork FPD:

- Jeffcom911 Computer Aided Dispatch System is one of the most advanced, state-of-the-art dispatch systems of its kind in use anywhere in the U.S.
- We are not, *"One call away for disaster!"*, call volumes are steadily declining:
  - Elk Creek FPD call volumes & acuities are down = ↓9% & ↓7.5%, respectively
  - Inter-Canyon FPD call volumes & acuities are down = ↓11% & ↓8%, respectively
  - North Fork FPD call volumes & acuities are mixed = ↓10% & ↑8%, respectively
- *"ONE CALL DOES GO OUT TO ALL OF THE FIREFIGHTER/EMT PERSONNEL ON-DUTY AT THE RESPONDING FIRE DISTRICTS WHO ARE LISTENING TO THE JEFFCOM911 DISPATCH CHANNEL!"*

## JEFFCOM911 CALL VOLUME AND ACUITY DATA

### Table 1A: Elk Creek FPD Calls to 9-1-1

Elk Creek FPD Call Volume		
Year	Calls to 9-1-1 per Jeffcom911	Calls to 9-1-1 per Elk Creek FPD
2020	1,198	1,328
2021	1,020	1,286
2022	1,190	1,386
2023	1,000	1,194
2024	1,092	1,346
<b>Yearly Average</b>	1,100	1,308

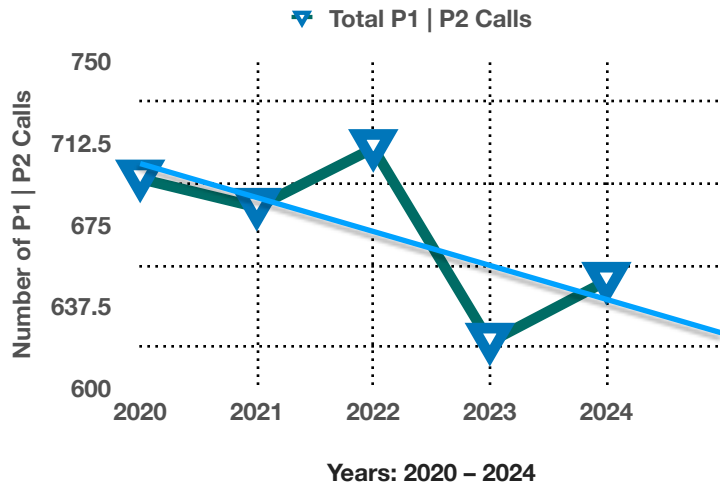


**Notes:**

1. According to Jeffcom911 reported data, the call volume at Elk Creek FPD is variable but steadily declining at about 1.8% per year or a total of 9% during the 5 year period studied.
2. According to Elk Creek FPD call volume records—taken from the monthly Chief’s Report—call volume at Elk Creed FPD is variable but trending slightly down over the 5 years studied.

### Table 1B: Elk Creek FPD 9-1-1 Call Acuity

Elk Creek FPD Call Acuity	
Year	P1/P2 Calls per Jeffcom911
2020	696
2021	683
2022	710
2023	621
2024	649
<b>Yearly Average</b>	672

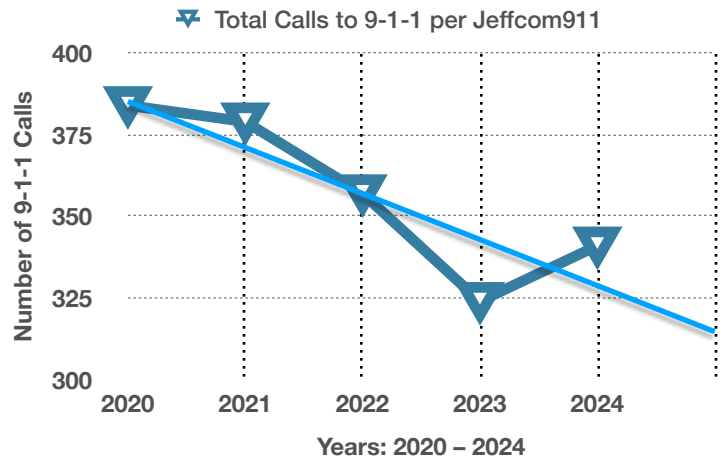


**Notes:**

1. Using total yearly P1 + P2 calls as a measure of call acuity, according to Jeffcom911 reported data, the call acuity at Elk Creek FPD is steady declining at about 1.5% per year or 7.5% during the 5 year period studied.
2. Jeffcom911 classifies calls into 3 reporting categories: P1, P2, & P3-6—Priorities 1 & 2 (high priority), then Priorities 3-6 (everything else)—with P1 & P2 being calls that are severe enough to warrant an emergent response (rolling fire and/or ambulance apparatus).

**Table 2A: Inter-Canyon FPD Calls to 9-1-1**

Inter-Canyon FPD Call Volume	
Year	Calls to 9-1-1 per Jeffcom911
2020	384
2021	379
2022	357
2023	324
2024	341
Yearly Average	357

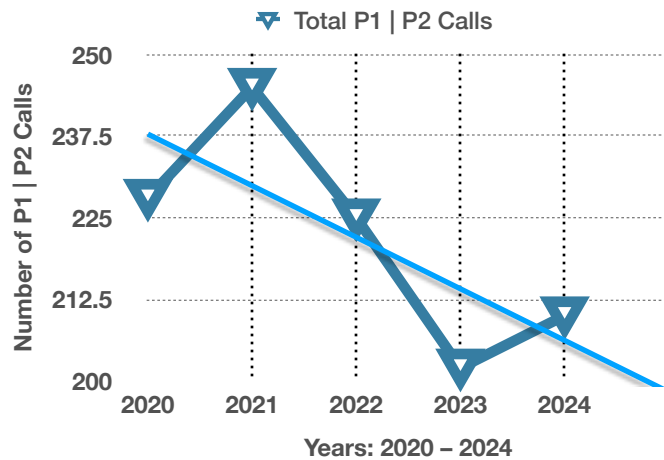


**Notes:**

1. According to Jeffcom911 reported data, the call volume at Inter-Canyon FPD is somewhat variable but steadily declining at about 2.2% per year or a total of 11% during the 5 year period studied.

**Table 2B: Inter-Canyon FPD 9-1-1 Call Acuity**

Inter-Canyon FPD Call Acuity	
Year	P1/P2 Calls per Jeffcom911
2020	228
2021	245
2022	225
2023	202
2024	210
Yearly Average	222

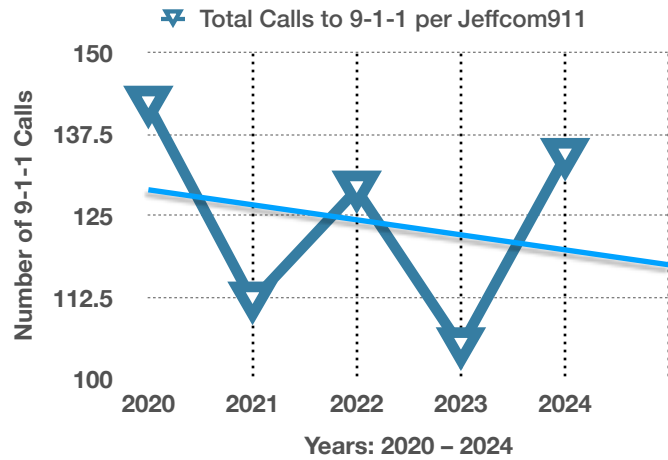


**Notes:**

1. According to Jeffcom911 reported data, the call acuity at Inter-Canyon FPD is variable but steadily declining at about 1.6% per year or a total of about 8% during the 5 year period studied.
2. Jeffcom911 classifies calls into 3 reporting categories: P1, P2, & P3-6—Priorities 1 & 2 (high priority), then Priorities 3-6 (everything else)—with P1 & P2 being calls that are severe enough to warrant an emergent response (rolling fire and/or ambulance apparatus).

**Table 3A: North Fork FPD Calls to 9-1-1**

North Fork FPD Call Volume	
Year	Calls to 9-1-1 per Jeffcom911
2020	142
2021	112
2022	129
2023	105
2024	134
Yearly Average	124

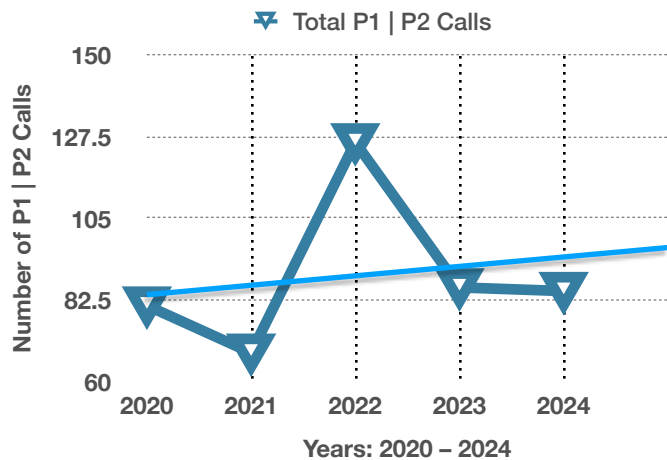


**Notes:**

1. According to Jeffcom911 reported data, the call volume at North Fork FPD is variable but steadily declining at about 2% per year or a total of 10% during the 5 year period studied.

**Table 3B: North Fork FPD 9-1-1 Call Acuity**

North Fork FPD Call Acuity	
Year	P1/P2 Calls per Jeffcom911
2020	81
2021	68
2022	126
2023	86
2024	85
Yearly Average	89



**Notes:**

1. According to Jeffcom911 reported data, the call acuity at North Fork FPD is variable but slightly increasing at about 1% per year or a total of 5% during the 5 year period studied.
2. Jeffcom911 classifies calls into 3 reporting categories: P1, P2, & P3-6—Priorities 1 & 2 (high priority), then Priorities 3-6 (everything else)—with P1 & P2 being calls that are severe enough to warrant an emergent response (rolling fire and/or ambulance apparatus).



**CONTACT ME:** Please send me your comments, questions, and concerns via email at: [cnewby.co@gmail.com](mailto:cnewby.co@gmail.com), I am always available.

### ***Newby for Elk Creek FPD***

#### **ENDNOTES:**

- <sup>1</sup> These statements were taken from an "interview" conducted with then Inter-Canyon FPD Fire Chief Skip Shirlaw by PIO Bethany Urban in which it is asserted that Fire Chief Shirlaw speaks on behalf of all three Fire Chiefs (the interview was originally posted to the Internet but is archived here [Chief Shirlaw "Unification" Interview August 2024](#) on August 17, 2024).
- <sup>2</sup> On December 9, 2024—after hearing no previous objection—the Colorado 1st Judicial District Court ordered the approval of the consolidation of the Inter-Canyon and North Fork FPDs, which has since been rebranded as the Conifer FPD dba/The Conifer Fire Department.
- <sup>3</sup> Formally, the Jefferson County Communications Center Authority, recently relocated to a larger facility in Golden CO.
- <sup>4</sup> In January of 2023, this author visited the Jeffcom911 facility when it was located at the West Metro FPD facility on South Allison Parkway in Lakewood CO and "rode" with the dispatcher as he handled several emergency calls, one of which was a fire alarm at the Kum & Go located on Kings Valley Drive in Conifer CO. The takeaway from the "ride-along" was that the emergency call handling capability of the system is a best-in-class operation.
- <sup>5</sup> This statement was made by PIO Urban but then immediately echoed by then Fire Chief Shirlaw with the statement, "**ABSOLUTELY!**".