



CITY OF WASHINGTON, ILLINOIS

City Council Agenda Communication

Meeting Date: January 18, 2022

Prepared By: Chief Michael D. McCoy and Deputy Chief Jeff Stevens

Agenda Item: Purchase of EMA Radios

Explanation: In December, 2020, after about a year of work, the Tazewell County Emergency Telephone Service Board (ETSB) approved a contract with Motorola to provide public safety communications throughout Tazewell County by expanding the STARCOM21 network to include the county. This contract was competitively bid collectively for Tazewell County public safety agencies.

STARCOM21 is a statewide system also used by Peoria and Woodford Counties, and part of the Statewide Communications Interoperability Plan (SCIP), which establishes a single statewide platform for all public safety agencies to share emergency information. SCIP is managed by the Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA) and was developed by a consortium of federal, state, and local public safety practitioners working through the Illinois Terrorism Task Force's (ITTF's) Communications Committee and the Statewide Interoperability Executive Committee.

STARCOM21 is an IP-based, Project-25 (P25) compliant system with proprietary features available only through Motorola equipment. Among those features is GPS-based location of emergency units, particularly attractive to an EMA whose members use privately-owned vehicles and who may change their duty location immediately based on a local weather or other emergency.

The state of current Washington Emergency Management Agency (EMA) radio communications is such that the EMA relies more heavily on cell phones than radios, particularly for some outlying spotting locations. The radio system does not include the signal boosters or repeaters necessary for appropriate coverage related to EMA duties, particularly for storm spotting. During call outs in 2021, the full team could not communicate by radio. On one occasion, a phone system outage cut team communication. STARCOM21 solves this issue and provides a more resilient base system through multiple towers in Peoria, Tazewell, and Woodford Counties. For storm spotting, Washington's EMA reports sightings to Tazewell EMA, requiring the local spotter to communicate to our local Coordinator, who then relays the information to Tazewell EMA, creating multiple potential areas of communication failure. Tazewell EMA will join the STARCOM21 system, creating interoperability.

To use the STARCOM21 system and Motorola's proprietary features, EMA must use Motorola equipment. As part of the ETSB master contract, Motorola provides pricing that is deeply discounted from list (near a 60% overall discount). As the pricing is tied to list, it is subject to change, and the list price did change, rising about 10%. We secured a quote for this budgeted item in advance of the change, and that quote is valid through January 28, 2022.

The radios will be immediately useable, but will not fully solve coverage issues until the Tazewell network is enabled. That target date is June, 2022.

We are seeking the Council's endorsement of the purchase of 20 portable radios for EMA use at a cost not to exceed \$50,159.20. The current EMA roll holds 18 members, plus Chief McCoy as the Mayor's delegate for oversight, control and direction of the EMA. The additional radio would provide a spare, room for an additional member, or additional communication capability for the City Administrator, Mayor, or another official during an extreme emergency.

Fiscal Impact: \$50,159.20. Our current FY budget includes \$41,020 in this line item, leaving an overage of \$9,139.20. We expect to cover this amount with other EMA funds (up to \$6,500) and will, if necessary, pledge Police funds to cover any portion of the overage found necessary at the end of the current fiscal year. We would work with the City Administrator to ensure the availability of funding.

Recommendation/

Committee Discussion Summary: Recommended based on factors listed.

Action Requested: Approval of a motion to authorize the EMA to purchase 20 Motorola radios and programming in an amount not to exceed \$50,159.20.