



City Commission Agenda Item

Meeting Date: October 7, 2025

From: Randy Frazer, City Manager

Item: Consider approval of Revised Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Cowley County regarding Outdoor Warning Sirens

Motion: A Resolution approving a revised Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Arkansas City and Cowley County, Kansas regarding the use, activation, maintenance, and operation of Outdoor Warning Sirens, therefore repealing Resolution No. 2024-08-3628. **(Voice Vote)**

Background: In August 2024, the City Commission approved a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Cowley County to clarify coordination between the City and County concerning the use, operation, and maintenance of outdoor warning sirens. Since that time, both parties have identified the need for revisions to streamline responsibilities and ensure consistency with current operational practices.

The revised MOU, dated November 1, 2025, is intended to replace and supersede the August 2024 agreement, repealing previously approve Resolution No. 2024-08-3628. This updated version aligns Arkansas City's agreement with the agreements Cowley County has in place with other municipalities, ensuring a consistent, county-wide approach to outdoor warning siren activation and maintenance.

Key differences between the August 2024 MOU and the proposed November 2025 MOU include:

1. Activation Authority – The new MOU grants Cowley County full authority to activate the City's outdoor warning sirens in accordance with the County's Standard Operating Guidelines (SOG) for severe weather. The previous MOU designated the city as the primary activator with County backup support.
2. Maintenance & Troubleshooting – The City retains ownership and financial responsibility for maintenance and repairs, but the County will assist with initial troubleshooting steps and coordinate vendor repairs with City concurrence.
3. Termination/Duration – Either party may terminate the agreement with 90 days' written notice, providing greater flexibility than the prior version.
4. Indemnification – The new MOU includes mutual indemnification provisions, ensuring both parties are protected in the event of liability claims arising from negligence.

By adopting this revised MOU, Arkansas City will be consistent with Cowley County's framework and the procedures used by other cities within the county, strengthening regional emergency coordination and enhancing public safety.

Staff recommend approval of the revised Memorandum of Understanding with Cowley County regarding the activation and maintenance of outdoor warning sirens.

Commission Options:

1. Approve the Resolution
2. Disapprove of the Resolution
3. Table the Resolution for further discussion

Fiscal Impact: The city remains solely responsible for all costs associated with siren maintenance, repairs, and upgrades. The County's role in troubleshooting and vendor coordination is supportive and does not create new budgetary obligations beyond the city's existing siren maintenance program.

Attachments: Resolution and 2025 Outdoor Warning Sirens MOU.

Approved for Agenda by:

Randy Frazer, City Manager