


MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and Council of Dalton

FROM: Jason Parker 

DATE: July 15, 2019

SUBJECT: Intergovernmental Agreement with Whitfield County – Countywide Radio Communication System

Please accept this recommendation to approve and sign the IGA with Whitfield County for use and maintenance of the 800 MHz countywide radio system which was purchased jointly by the cities and county using 2015 SPLOST funds. Although the system was purchased jointly, it makes the most sense to locate the daily operations and control of the system with the county by way of its emergency management agency.

- This radio system replaced a 40-year old system that was so dysfunctional that city public safety officers who were in hazardous situations could not conduct critical communications.
- Also covered by the SPLOST was the one-time, \$600K “buy-in” to the Tennessee Valley System, which was facilitated by way of an agreement between Whitfield County and the System
- Implementing the radio system with the Tennessee Valley network cut the cost of the project from \$25 million to \$12 million
- The new system’s performance has far exceeded expectations

Currently, the city’s police, public works, and fire departments have a total of 402 radio units consisting of a combination of handheld portable, and vehicle-mounted configurations. The current annual cost of the per-radio subscriber fee is \$45,285, or about \$115 per radio.

- That fee is paid to the county to reimburse for the license fees paid to the Tennessee Valley Regional Communication System, and it covers maintenance and upgrades to the network.
- It is likely the per-radio fee will increase a small amount from time-to-time
- The fee does not cover work or upgrades on the physical components owned by and located in Whitfield County
- Future upgrades of the network may require correlating upgrades to the local, physical components. If so, Dalton would be required to cover its share
- It is possible that the **number** of per-radio fees may decrease over time since current experience in the field is that both a vehicle-mounted radio, and handheld portable may not be needed in all cases. On a case-by-case basis, the departments may elect not to replace some of the vehicle mounted radios after the useful life is expired.

JP/jp