Staff Report

Subject: **Phone and Network Connectivity to Multiple County Sites**
Author: Chris Reed, I.T. Director
Department: Information Technology
Meeting Date: 01-03-2023
Item Description: Consideration to approve a service agreement with Planters Communications to provide phone and Layer 2 fiber Network to multiple county sites.

Summary Recommendation:

Effingham County's current phone service and Network infrastructure between sites is in need of upgrades. Today our network that interconnects our sites and buildings is comprised of multiple methodologies and vendors due to the county being split between multiple providers. Parts of our phone service are being provided over much older copper based technology that is aging and getting closer to not being supported. Some service providers are not even offering some of the solutions we have today.

Executive Summary/Background:

Effingham County's communications network supports all of the county departments for both data and telephone communications and connects over 1100 devices with over 400 Full Time employees.

Most of our fiber that we utilize today is aerial and places the county at high risk of a major network outage from the fiber being damaged. This damage could be from trees falling on the lines from a storm, to an auto accident taking a pole out, to malicious or terrorist acts.

Hurricane Matthew was a wakeup call to the risk involved and the time it took to restore services around the southeast portion of the state. Since then we have helped out and seen the destruction from the Bryan County tornadoes. Between these events and changes with our vendors we decided to reach out for new solutions and quotes for those solutions.

This has been an ongoing process with changes along the way. We have dealt with COVID, different budgets, building moves, and new buildings being built, changes that were surprises to everyone, and we appreciate all of our Vendors patience, dedication, and hard work put in to this process.

Alternatives for Commission to Consider:

1. Board approval of the service agreements with Planters Communications for Layer 2 fiber solution and phone service.
2. Do not approve the service agreements with Planters Communications and continue using the current services and providers.

Recommended Alternative:

Staff recommends Alternative number 1

Other Alternatives: N/A

Department Review: Information Technology / Emergency Management / 911 Services / Sheriff's Office / County Manager / Finance

Funding Source:
Total: After a full audit of our services and vendors there should be less than $100 per month difference in overall spend once the process has been completed. This will result in much more reliable and better service to many of our facilities. This was planned for and budgeted in this year's budget.

Attachments:
1. Planters Contract (SITES 1-24).pdf
2. Planters Contract (Phone Services).pdf
3. Windstream Switched Ethernet- 1968883.pdf
4. 7-23-19-Meeting-W-ComCast-New-Pricing-2022-12-16-204925.pdf
5. Effingham County IT Department Report on Network and Phone Service Vendors with Review of Proposals.docx   with reference documents a-l.
   a. 4-4-2000 Comcast Resolution.pdf   Effingham County Minute Book Pages
   b. County-Memo-Pricing-6-15-00.pdf   Lamar Crosby Memo to Commissioners
   c. County-Memo-Pricing-9-20-00.pdf   John Karrh Memo to Lamar Crosby
   d. County-Memo-Pricing-10-2-00.pdf   Lamar Crosby Memo to Commissioners
   e. Comcast-Communications and pricing   County and Comcast about fiber
   f. AllTel-Quote.pdf   1999 Competitive bid from AllTel Communications
   g. Infinity-Quote.pdf   1999 Competitive bid from Infinity Inc.
   h. Comcast Storm Restoration Update.pdf From Comcast on Restoration Efforts
   i. 7-18-19-Comcast-Email   Email confirming Meeting on 7-23-19
   j. Planters bylaws-1.pdf   Page 16 ARTICLE VII NON-PROFIT OPERATION
   k. Windstream SD WAN- 1958481.pdf   Windstream SDWAN Layer -3 Proposal
   l. Windstream Email Jan 2020.pdf   Windstream Layer 2 and 3 with speed options
6. Effingham ILEC Map_AKA_FCC Telecom Map_20221216.pdf
7. Voice and Data Cost Analysis with Proposal Numbers.xlsx