

VILLAGE OF HOMEWOOD



BOARD AGENDA MEMORANDUM

DATE OF MEETING: April 9, 2024

To: Village President and Board of Trustees

Through: Napoleon Haney, Village Manager

From: John Schaefer, Director of Public Works

Topic: Radio communication system

PURPOSE

Approve the purchase of a radio communication system from Alpha Prime Communications of Monee, Illinois that will provide 24-hour communications for the Public Works Department.

PROCESS

The radio communications system for Public Works needs to be replaced. The base station located in the Police Department is no longer able to connect to the Public Works building as a result of the elimination of the AT&T Plain Old Telephone Service (POTS) lines which previously provided the link between Public Works and the Police Department. Plain Old Telephone Service (POTS) is an analog-based phone line implemented over twisted-pair copper wires. Its service is provided directly by the local telephone company. In addition, radio manufacturers are no longer producing radios in the frequency license range that we use. As a result, there are no “replacement purchase” solutions available for the current radios that need to be replaced.

As a critical component of the Village’s first responder group comprising of Public Works, Police and Fire, the Public Works department looked for different solutions that would provide communications between the first responder group, especially during a major event or disaster. Public Works initially opted onto the Cook County Emergency Communication Network system, but were told that only Police and Fire departments could participate on their system. Public Works also contacted StarCom which is a system that is operated by the State of Illinois, but the cost to participate in this system was not affordable. It was determined that the only solution would be for Public Works to purchase an entirely new radio system with an estimated cost of \$348,000.

Staff reviewed various radios that would meet the current needs of Public Works with the plan that, in the future, the radios would be able to communicate with the Police and Fire departments during emergencies. Two radios brands were considered; Motorola, which is the industry standard, and a Tait. It is staff’s opinion that both radios are comparable in regards to durability and meeting the department’s communication needs; however, the price of the Motorola radio is nearly twice as much as the Tait radio. The lead time of ordering, receiving and availability of the Tait radio is also considerably better than the Motorola. Additionally, Tait

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radios are part of the government purchasing cooperative, which will allow us to save an estimated \$179,753.28 in costs. As proposed and requested by Public Works, the radio communication system will include 35 portable radios and three desktop units, with a repeater and antenna system that will be installed by Alpha Prime Communications.

OUTCOME

Approving this purchase will provide Public Works with the critical radio communications system needed and will serve as a tool for future communications between the Police, Fire, and Public Works departments during a major event or disaster.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

- **Funding Source:** General Capital and Water & Sewer Capital
- **Budgeted Amount:** General Capital (50%) \$174,000
Water & Sewer Capital (50%) 174,000

LEGAL REVIEW

Not required

RECOMMENDED BOARD ACTION

Waive competitive bidding due to acquisition through a government purchasing cooperative; and, approve the purchase of a radio communication system and accessories for Public Works from Alpha Prime Communications, of Monee, IL in an amount not to exceed \$176,646.72, which includes a 5% contingency if needed for unforeseen antennae installation costs.

ATTACHMENT(S)

Proposal from Alpha Prime