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April 4, 2025

**To:** City Managers, City Administrators, Fire Chiefs, and School Superintendents of Johnson County

**Subject:** Upcoming First Responder Radio Network Expenses – Planning for Long-Term Sustainability

Dear Colleagues:

I am reaching out to update you on significant upcoming expenses related to the continued maintenance and future viability of our jointly operated **First Responder Radio Network**. As you know, this critical infrastructure serves as the communication backbone for emergency response across the County and is co-owned and co-managed by all our entities, including each of your organizations and the County itself.

Attached to this email is a PowerPoint presentation outlining the lifecycle of our existing radio equipment and providing estimated costs associated with its replacement. Much of this equipment will have been in continuous service for nearly 20 years by the time we anticipate replacement, and to maintain the functionality and reliability of the network, we project **mandatory upgrades totaling approximately \$6 million over the next 7 years**.

These costs will necessarily be shared by all participating entities, just as the benefits of this network are shared across all of our jurisdictions.

We are actively exploring multiple options to address this financial need and ensure the sustainability of our network. Potential paths forward include:

- **Paying cash** for the upgrades, with costs divided proportionally among all entities – while straightforward, this is likely **cost prohibitive** for most of entities.
- **Exploring alternative vendors** – though any cost savings may be limited and could come with potential impacts to network performance and reliability.
- **Financing through Motorola**, our current provider – which may be viable, but would carry an **estimated additional cost of \$40 per radio per month**.
- **Establishing a Radio Capital Improvement Fund**, allowing all entities to begin contributing toward future expenses in a structured, sustainable way.

At this stage, **all options remain on the table**, and we strongly encourage each of you to begin considering how your organization might approach this challenge. Right now, time is on our side

– the majority of the equipment currently in use will continue to be supported by Motorola until approximately 2032. If we act quickly, I believe we can find a solution that allows all our entities to continue participating in the radio network.

We must collectively make decisions both in the **short term**—such as determining whether to allocate more funds in the upcoming budget cycle—and the **long term**, including how we ultimately finance or fund these necessary upgrades. Importantly, **no single entity will decide for the group**. We are committed to a collaborative process that remains sensitive to the financial capacities and constraints of all participants.

Please take some time to review the attached presentation and begin internal discussions on your end. We welcome your input and ideas as we move toward a joint solution that ensures the continued functionality of our radio network.

Thank you for your partnership and continued commitment to supporting first responder services across Johnson County.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'CBoedeker', is written over the printed name.

Christopher Boedeker