



**CITY COUNCIL
AGENDA ITEM STAFF REPORT**

MEETING DATE:	JANUARY 14, 2025
TITLE:	AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE WAIVER OF THE COMPETITIVE BIDDING PROCESS IN RELATION TO THE PURCHASE OF PORTABLE RADIOS FROM MOTOROLA SOLUTIONS IN RELATION TO AN ASSISTANCE TO FIREFIGHTERS GRANT FROM FEMA
DEPARTMENT:	FIRE DEPARTMENT
PROJECT MANAGER:	JOHN V. BAILOT, FIRE CHIEF
REQUESTED ACTION:	APPROVAL
STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL(S):	#6 KEEP COLLINSVILLE SAFE AND IMPROVE THE PERCEPTION OF PUBLIC SAFETY IN THE COMMUNITY, #7 SUPPORT EXCELLENT MUNICIPAL SERVICES
ATTACHMENTS:	ORDINANCE, QUOTE, GRANT AWARD LETTER, CIP PROJECT PAGE

Summary Recommendation

Staff recommends approval of an ordinance authorizing the waiver of the competitive bidding process in relation to the purchase of portable radios from Motorola solutions in relation to an Assistance to Firefighters Grant from FEMA.

Executive Summary

The Fire Department was awarded a \$271,600 grant through the Assistance to Firefighters Grant program funded by FEMA to purchase 32 replacement portable radios and appurtenances. After exploring the two radio options (Motorola and Kenwood) that reportedly work with the county-wide communications backbone, the department members elected to stay consistent and purchase the Motorola product. This projected is a CPI carryover project from 2024, funded again in 2025. The grant reimburses the City up to \$246,918.18 and the City's portion is up to the 10% balance of \$24,691.82. The total cost for this project is \$271,392.78; therefore, we will be under budget.

Background

The Fire Department's portable radios are functioning beyond their expected service life and servicing the radios is becoming a challenge. The current radios are single band on the 800 MHz wavelength. At times when we assist another fire service agency, we are unable to communicate with them as they are operating on a VHF band, and our current radios cannot access that wavelength. The new radios are dual band, meaning that they will communicate on both the 800 MHz and the VHF frequencies. We are very grateful to FEMA for awarding the grant to procure the new radios, which will now provide us with necessary interoperability with other departments.

During our exploration of the two manufacturer's radios, we found a few significant differences between the two options which lead us to conclude that Motorola Solutions is the preferred vendor. The compatibility between Kenwood and the STARCOM-21 network, which is the communications backbone,

has not been fully confirmed, though in trials it reportedly works. STARCOM-21 is a Motorola product and as we currently have all Motorola mobile and portable radios, the communications are seamless: we have confidence with the Motorola system. The Motorola radios are Wifi enabled whereas the Kenwood radios do not have Wifi capabilities. This feature is important for us because in certain areas of the city we lose signal due to our topography. One notable location is the Collinsville High School. At this location the school resource officers use the wi-fi connection to communicate with our dispatch center when they lose "normal" radio signal. We have the same problem at this site. In the event of a significant event at this school, without the wi-fi connection our communications would be diminished if not eliminated.

Another significant difference is that only the Motorola portable met the specification we submitted for the grant with the lapel speaker/microphone. We must purchase portable radios lapel mics which are designed for high heat use and with channel selection. Kenwood's high heat mics do not have the ability to change channels. This is an important safety feature that we feel every firefighter should have.

The portable radios and appurtenances that we will purchase from Motorola Solutions are priced under State bid #35622.

Recommendation

Staff recommends approval of the ordinance waiving the competitive bidding process in relation to the purchase of portable radios from Motorola Solutions.

Departmental Review

Administration, Finance, Corporate Council, Fire Department