

Item 23-0999: Fire Department Request for Approval to Purchase Radio Equipment

Safety and Licensing Committee

Wed, Aug 23, 2023, 5:30PM

Aldersperson Chris Croatt (District 14) 01:14

No scheduled public hearings or appearances. No action items listed. We'll go to the information items, which is—the first one is 23-0999 is the fire department request for approval to purchase radio equipment. So, this is listed as an information item. You'll see it's a request for approval. So, as we go through this, I would ask if we would be—the committee would entertain the motion to move it to an action item tonight. You want to start Chief Hansen with going over the attachment? Should be good.

Fire Chief Jeremy Hansen 01:57

Thank you, chair. Before the committee is a memo discussing the desire for the fire department to purchase radio equipment. Back in August of 2022 we received a grant from the firefighters assistance grant through FEMA, for one—just over \$1.8 million to purchase radios. This was a regional grant that 18 fire departments including Appleton was part of. Appleton was the host committee that filed all the paperwork and worked with all the 18 departments to gather all their data that was required for the grant.

Fire Chief Jeremy Hansen 02:36

After we were we were awarded the grant, we held a county chiefs, fire chiefs, meeting, where vendors were asked to come in and present their products to the entire county. After that meeting, we developed a subcommittee of six fire departments and they are city of Appleton, Grand Chute, Dale, Kaukauna, Kimberly, and Freedom. So, we crossed the bounds from career, combination, and volunteer. And those committee members helped develop a request for quotes.

Fire Chief Jeremy Hansen 03:13

From there, that request for quotes was sent out. There was about a month timeline for vendors to submit their quotes and their products. During that time, they also had another opportunity for vendors to come in, and I believe that each vendor was given an hour to present their product. And that was before the RFQ. So, I'll back up just a second before the RFQ went out. When the RFQ went out, they had a month to provide basically a quote, and we had two vendors submit quotes. One of them is here today. Baycom Motorola is here today.

Fire Chief Jeremy Hansen 03:52

Once we receive those quotes from the vendors we scanned 'em in basically and sent them to each subcommittee member. All six of the fire departments scored it independently, most of them from the confines of their home. Then they emailed in their scoring sheets and Deputy Chief Ryan Weyers tabulated them. In the memo it shows the tabulation of the of the scores from each of the fire departments. And with those scores we are recommending and requesting approval to purchase our radios from Motorola Baycom.

Aldersperson Chris Croatt (District 14) 04:31

Okay. Thanks, Chief. Before we decide what we're going to do with the information item, could you talk a little bit to the timing component of this and why we might want to move it up to action tonight?

Fire Chief Jeremy Hansen 04:43

Yes, if we could move this to an action item that'd be very helpful. We're hoping for Council approval—September 6 I believe is the next Council member, er Council meeting. From there we're able to put in an order

once we have approval from Council. The lead time on radios can be anywhere from six to 12 months, and the goal is to get them in, programmed and in service hopefully by the end of the year.

Fire Chief Jeremy Hansen 05:12

At least from the city of Appleton's perspective, this does have some budgetary impact. Last fall through the budget process, I believe, we have an additional \$300,00—\$300,300 in our budget for 2023 to purchase the radios that the grant will not cover to make our entire set of radios all the same. So, for the city of Appleton there is—we would like to receive the items prior to the end of the year to stay in line with purchasing procurement policy.

Aldersperson Chris Croatt (District 14) 05:46

Okay, thank you for that. And just to be clear, just so everyone's is—in case someone's wondering, it was not intentionally listed as an information item. Was a bit of an oversight. It was intended to be an action item. I did consult with Attorney Behrens on this. We are able—unless there's opposition from the committee, we are able to move it to an action item. Does take a formal motion I believe. Attorney Buruin. I'm sorry, which?

Zak Buruin (Assistant City Attorney) 06:11

That is correct. The notice is sufficient to move it to an action item. Will note and there was some additional discussion later in the day here, there is likely to be another item for which there is a special session of this committee requested on the sixth. So, there will likely already be a special session that we could take this up prior to the next Council meeting. So that would preserve the timetable that the chief was talking about. That will be appropriate. And that way, there's absolutely zero issues whatsoever. But we are able to go forward with it today as an action item if the committee wishes to. We just have other options too.

Aldersperson Chris Croatt (District 14) 06:50

Okay, so let's take that up first and then get it on the table here with a motion. I'll make a motion to move it to an action item. Is there a second?

Aldersperson Nate Wolff (District 12) 06:58

Second.

Aldersperson Chris Croatt (District 14) 06:59

Okay, is there—should we take a vote on that on the move to action? Okay, so, all right. Any discussion on moving to action? Okay, all in favor of moving it from an information item to an action item signify by saying aye. Aye. All opposed? Okay, five, zero.

Aldersperson Chris Croatt (District 14) 07:17

We now have an action item, which is the request to approve the radio purchase—or purchase the radio equipment. And the memo recommendation is from Motorola Baycomm. So just to be clear on that. Okay.

Aldersperson Alex Schultz (District 9) 07:30

Motion to approve.

Aldersperson Chris Croatt (District 14) 07:31

Okay, motion to approve. I'll second. Questions? Aldersperson Van Zeeland.

Alderson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 07:36

Thank you, Chair. I just wanted to clarify, the next action item 23-1024 is a grant allocation. But there's no information as to where that's being allocated. That's not a part of this radio purchase?

Fire Chief Jeremy Hansen 07:50

It is not.

Alderson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 07:51

Okay. Thank you.

Alderson Chris Croatt (District 14) 07:52

Thank you for asking that clarification. All right any questions on the memo or the or the scoring or anything? I do have one question, Chief, that I had advised you. I would ask if you could just talk a little bit about the—as I looked through the scoring comparison, can you talk a little bit about the multi-year price and the—there's a bit of a variance there between the scoring entities or person scoring. I just was wondering if you could comment on that.

Fire Chief Jeremy Hansen 08:20

Sure. Part of the RFQ was to give pricing for 2023 and for 2024. So, with the quotes that we receive back, one vendor had a price for 2023 and no increase for 2024. The other vendor that we received had a price for 2023 and a 15% increase in 2024. So why—let me back up and say for the City of Appleton, it really doesn't matter to us that there's a price increase because we plan on buying all of our radios in this fiscal year. However, some of the other departments were looking at figuring out what the grant funded and then buying and—budgeting and then buying the additional radios next year. So that could be for the reason for the variance between the points.

Fire Chief Jeremy Hansen 09:16

I will point out that scorer number six where it was 20 and 20, that was the city of Appleton because they gave a pricing model for two years and it doesn't affect us. So, but the other departments you could see that some of them have significant impact by a 15% raise on the cost of the equipment. That, depending on the radio, that could be \$1,500 per radio.

Alderson Chris Croatt (District 14) 09:43

Okay, thank you. And could you list the six departments that were involved in the scoring again. I know you did it earlier, but I didn't jot it down.

Fire Chief Jeremy Hansen 09:51

It was Appleton, Grand Chute, Dale, Kaukauna, Kimberly, and Freedom.

Alderson Chris Croatt (District 14) 10:02

Okay, thanks. Any other questions from committee members on this? We have a motion and a second to approve awarding the approval to Motorola Baycom. Seeing no hands, we'll take a vote. All in favor of approving signify by saying aye. Aye. All opposed? Five zero. That will go as a recommendation to the full Council at the next meeting at the next Council meeting.