

At a Regular Meeting of the 911 Communications Oversight Committee on Monday, May 23, 2022, at 1:30 p.m., in the Commission Chambers of City Hall located at 300 South 5th Street the following Committee members were present: Dr. Irvin Smith, Carol Gault, Jewel Jones, Eddie Jones, and Kevin Kauffeld (5). Chairperson Kevin Kauffeld presided.

Also present were Assistant Chief Anthony Copeland; Fire Chief Steve Kyle; Communications Manager Pam Spencer; Finance Director Jon Perkins; and City Clerk Lindsay Parish.

City Clerk Lindsay Parish took the minutes of the meeting.

APPROVE MINUTES

Jewel Jones offered motion, seconded by Commissioner Carol Gault to approve minutes for April 25, 2022. All in favor.

MAYOR BRAY COMMENTS

Mayor Bray offered comments to the committee to encourage them to continue moving forward and to find solutions to upgrade the antiquated and out of date 911 system. He reiterated that in 2017, the consultant made it clear that the current radio system, which was installed in 1994, was at the end of its useful life. The City of Paducah took over as the sole manager of the system in 2016. In 2018, vendor support of the current system ended. The system currently has “dead spots” in some key locations. Upgrading the system became a priority for the City Commission at their first Commission Retreat in 2021. Since that time, the City has been asked by the County to become full partners in the County Sports Plex Project. The City agreed to the Sports Plex partnership under the condition that the County would become full partners on the 911 Upgrade Project. The most challenging decision is how to pay for the 911 system. Mayor Bray encouraged the Committee to continue working with urgency to develop a proposal for the City Commission and County Fiscal Court. He appreciates the members of the Committee and the challenging work they have taken on. Mayor Bray would like the Committee to come back to the City Commission and Fiscal Court with at least a couple of options for funding.

911 DISCUSSION

EDDIE JONES COMMENTS

Commissioner Eddie Jones commented that the failure to receive reimbursement for the \$6 million local expenditure related to the Barkley Regional Airport has impeded the County from being able to move forward with 911 upgrades. He believes that the 911 Upgrade Project would be further along if that funding had been freed up for use on 911. Additionally, he indicated that the County agreed to be partners with the City on the 911 project, but not necessarily that the 911 Upgrade and the Sports Plex Projects would run on the same timeline. He indicated the need to put more information out to the public on the need for 911 upgrades and to carefully consider the timeline related to implementation of fees.

JEWEL JONES COMMENTS

Mr. Jones commented that so many tragic situations have happened around the nation. In the event something should happen here in McCracken County, he wants Public Safety to be ready and have the towers and tools they need to respond.

CAROL GAULT COMMENTS

Commissioner Gault reiterated the need to bring a draft agreement to the City Commission and Fiscal Court. Once the proposals come in, the City and County will need to be ready to make decisions since the proposals are only valid for a limited amount of time.

FIRE CHIEF STEVE KYLE COMMENTS

When asked about additional information related to the need for a 911 system upgrade, Fire Chief Steve Kyle offered the following information:

- One concern about the current system is in relation to an active shooter situation. Dead spots could prevent a first responder from being able to connect with backup due to a dead spot.
- The larger concern is that the system operates on Windows XP which had a 2014 End-of-Life (EOL). The hardware EOL was between 2015-2018. This is the core of the radio equipment and if it stops working, there is no emergency radio communication at all.
- The primary goal of the upgrade is to achieve 95% reliability for the system as a whole. A correctly functioning 911 system achieves this reliability rate.
- When the system was originally built in 1994, it was designed as a much smaller system for a smaller area. The County came onboard with the system in 1998. Since the original build, there are many more users and a great deal more space for the system to cover.

ANTHONY COPELAND – POLICE DEPARTMENT ASSISTANT CHIEF COMMENTS

Commissioner Eddie Jones asked Assistant Chief Copeland about the possibility of starting with 2 or 3 towers or just the radio hardware/software and then expanding to additional towers in later years. Assistant Chief Copeland noted that the radio tower system is interdependent, meaning that the locations of towers for a 3-tower system would be very different from the locations where they would be placed for a 6-tower system. The interdependence makes it difficult to piece together a 911 system over time. Additionally, a 3-tower system would not meet the minimum 95% reliability standard. Assistant Chief Copeland estimated that the system is currently at 55% reliability, but that he could request more precise figure from the consultant if needed.

UPDATE ON RFP PROCESS AND TIMELINE

Chairperson Kevin Kauffeld gave the following update:

The City of Paducah and the McCracken County Fiscal Court voted on May 11, 2022, and May 10, 2022, respectively, to authorize payment to Federal Engineering for professional services related to Request for Proposals Preparation, Proposal Evaluation and Contract Negotiations for an Upgraded 911 System in a total amount of \$67,790 with the City and County each paying one

half of the total cost. The contract will be paid based on 3 milestones as outlined by the agreement with Federal Engineering.

Chairperson Kauffeld notified the group that Federal Engineering has recommended a small working group meet with Federal Engineering on a regular basis to review the development of the Request for Proposals. This small working group will meet for 90-120 days in total.

UPDATE ON FUNDING OPINION

Chairperson Kevin Kauffeld gave the following update:

The Committee had previously asked Attorney Stacey Blankenship about the legality of charging different rates for different sizes of water meters. Ms. Blankenship issued a legal opinion that different rates cannot be charged based on the water meter size. Additionally, a parcel fee cannot be charged to unoccupied parcels. Chairperson Kauffeld offered that a water meter fee supplemented with a parcel fee may still be the best option.

Commissioner Eddie Jones offered that the Committee could propose a fee now and then an increase to that fee on April 1, 2023. This would give time for the legislature to reconsider the Barkley Regional Airport funding issue.

Commissioner Carol Gault suggested a meeting between Deputy Judge Steve Doolittle and Finance Director Jon Perkins to apply real figures to Commissioner Eddie Jones' suggestion and bring that back at the next meeting of the Committee. She suggested that they use the current estimated figures to develop 2 or 3 possible scenarios.

DISCUSSION ON FUTURE OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

The Committee agreed to bring back the discussion on a potential oversight committee at a future meeting.

ADJOURN

Mr. Jewel Jones offered motion, seconded by Commissioner Eddie Jones to adjourn the meeting. All in favor.

ADOPTED: _____