



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA LETTER

Agenda Number:

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 568-2240

Department Name: Fire
Department No.: 031
For Agenda Of: March 12, 2024
Placement: Administrative
Estimated Tme:
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from:
Vote Required: 4/5

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Department Mark A. Hartwig, Fire Chief/Fire Warden, 805-681-5500
Director(s)
Contact Info: Garrett Huff, Acting Deputy Chief, 805-681-5503

SUBJECT: Request for Waiver of Competition in Purchase of Locution PrimeAlert Fire Station Alerting Systems

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Other Concurrence: Purchasing & CEO Budget

As to form: Yes

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Recommended Actions:

That the Board of Supervisors:

- a) Authorize the Chief Procurement Officer as the County Purchasing Agent, pursuant to County Code Section 2-39, to procure two Locution PrimeAlert Fire Station Alerting Systems for the Regional Fire Communications Center (RFCC) and the Backup Dispatch Center, for a total amount of \$213,372, without conducting a competitive procurement; and
- b) Approve Budget Revision Request No. 0009506 to establish appropriations of \$232,000 in the Fire Protection District fund for capital assets (4/5 vote required); and
- c) Determine pursuant to CEQA Guidelines § 15378(b) (4) that the above fiscal activity is not a project subject to the California Environmental Quality Act.

Summary Text:

Pursuant to County Code Section 2-39, the Fire Department is requesting that the Board of Supervisors waive the requirement for a competitive bid for the purchase of two (2) Locution PrimeAlert Fire Station Alerting Systems because of the necessary specifications of the Locution PrimeAlert System that cannot be found in other products.

On November 16, 2021, your Board granted approval for the construction of the Regional Fire Communications Center (RFCC) by the Fire Department. The RFCC, and its backup facility, the Backup Dispatch Center, will provide seamless dispatch of fire-rescue and emergency medical units across all fire departments and paramedic ambulances operating within the County. The Locution PrimeAlert Fire Station Alerting System is required to integrate the notification of fire and rescue units from several cities and districts served by the new RFCC. No other known system can integrate with existing systems already in use at the Santa Barbara City Fire Department and the Santa Maria City Fire Department, as well as the systems planned for use by the Carpinteria-Summerland Fire Protection District and the Montecito Fire Protection District. Additionally, the Locution PrimeAlert Fire Station Alerting System has the capability to notify fire and rescue units from all other fire, rescue and medical units operating within our County.

The Locution PrimeAlert Fire Station Alerting system plays a crucial role by automating notifications for fire-rescue and emergency medical units assigned to incidents by the RFCC or back-up dispatch center. This notification process operates seamlessly, regardless of whether resources are on-site or elsewhere. The Locution PrimeAlert system is designed for interoperability, connecting with the Fire Department's Computer-Aided Dispatch system, the County's existing and upcoming radio systems, as well as both city and County Fire Departments' subscriber radios and fire station alerting equipment.

Background:

Fire station alerting systems are comprised of three key components: 1) the dispatch alerting system responsible for broadcasting alerts, 2) the transport mechanism carrying the alert signal, and 3) the fire station alerting equipment that receives and acknowledges the alert. Locution PrimeAlert represents the initial component of these three.

Historically, the transport mechanism for alert signals to fire stations has relied on radio frequency (RF), a highly reliable but relatively slow technology compared to newer alternatives. The Locution Fire Station Alerting System introduces the capability to alert units in stations via internet protocol (IP) in microseconds, a significant improvement over the several seconds taken by radio frequency (RF). Shorter alert times equate to faster response times to emergency medical incidents, which contributes to improved patient outcomes. In addition to the Locution PrimeAlert dispatch equipment, IP alerting necessitates IP-data circuits and Locution fire station alerting equipment. Noteworthy is that all notifications are sequentially assigned and sent by the CAD system, whether they be IP or RF alerts.

As part of the County's consolidation of fire-rescue and emergency medical dispatch operations, interoperability with fire station alerting systems and equipment from partner agencies is imperative. Compatibility with the Locution fire station alerting equipment currently in use at all city fire stations is essential. The City of Santa Barbara and City of Santa Maria currently utilize all three components of the Locution PrimeAlert Fire Station Alerting system. The Locution System, encompassing both dispatch and fire station equipment, has been successfully operated in the City of Santa Barbara and the City of Santa Maria for over three years. Meanwhile, the Carpinteria-Summerland Fire Protection District is in the process of installing Locution station alerting equipment and will commence receiving IP-alerts upon the go-live of the RFCC, and the Montecito Fire Protection District is weighing the purchase of Locution station alerting equipment. It's important to note that the Locution Fire Station Alerting System is proprietary, requiring both the Locution PrimeAlert at RFCC/Backup Dispatch Center and Locution fire station alerting equipment to facilitate IP-alerting with acknowledgement. No other known system can integrate with existing systems already in use at these city stations without degrading capabilities already in place.

Furthermore, the Locution system has the flexibility to alert stations using RF as a primary transport mechanism for stations that are not equipped with the Locution station alerting equipment, such as County Fire stations, other cities fire stations, and units that are not in station at the time of notification. Locution also employs RF as a backup alerting method if the IP-alert is not acknowledged by stations on the IP-data network. In the future, the County Fire Department, and other cities, have the option to upgrade fire station equipment to receive IP-alerts from the Locution PrimeAlert system. It should be noted that the entire fire, rescue, and emergency medical response system will benefit from IP-alerts sent to the entities equipped with the Locution fire station equipment because RF notifications in que will be accelerated by several seconds. This is particularly important during times of heavy emergency response activity. The County of Santa Barbara Fire Department will be phasing in the Locution system to align with our capital improvement plan over several years. Stations that require replacement in the capital recommendations for the department will not have the integration immediately.

Timeframe

These Locution PrimeAlert systems will be installed in consonance with the installation of other communications equipment during the final phases of construction at the RFCC and Backup Dispatch Center. The RFCC is scheduled to open in summer 2024, with the Backup Dispatch Center to follow.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

Budgeted: No. The Budget Revision Request recommended for approval (Attachment B) budgets the necessary appropriations for the purchase of two Locution PrimeAlert systems. **Fiscal Analysis:**

The Locution PrimeAlert system was not originally anticipated to be implemented during this portion of the project and was therefore, not included in the FY 2023-24 adopted budget. BJE-0009506 is submitted with this board letter in the amount of \$232,000 to cover the cost of the purchase plus any sales taxes that must be remitted to the State of California. The Locution PrimeAlert vendor is an out-of-state vendor that does not directly collect State of California sales and use taxes so the Fire Department will need to remit required sales taxes separately to the state.

Staffing Impacts:

Legal Positions:
0

FTEs:
0

Special Instructions:

Please send a certified copy of the minute order to the following:
Courtney Stockton, Fire Department
Purchasing Agent

Attachments:

- A. Sales Quote dated December 18, 2023
- B. Budget Revision BJE-0009506

Authored by:

Sergio Sanchez, Support Services Division Chief

cc:

Shawna Jorgensen, Deputy Director/Chief Financial Officer

Garrett Huff, Acting Deputy Chief