

STAFF REPORT

City Council Business Item

DATE: April 17, 2023

TO: Honorable Mayor and Council Members

FROM: Brendan Byrd, Public Works Director/City Engineer
Matt Eberhardt, Police Lieutenant

THROUGH: Merritt Perry, City Manager

SUBJECT: **Approve Negotiation for Radio Communications Equipment for the Police Facility Remodel Project, *Resolution 2023-09*, and Approve a Supplemental Budget Request**

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt *Resolution 2023-09*, authorizing the City Manager to negotiate a contract for radio communications upgrades from Silke Communications for the Police Facility Remodel Project.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Currently the Fortuna Police Department's Dispatch Communications Center utilizes a ModUCom Radio System, which was installed prior to the year 2000. Since then the system underwent a minor upgrade and service agreement extension in 2015, however, this did not include any upgrades or updates to the radio hardware itself, and most of the dispatch equipment is still original.

In 2018, police department staff learned that ModUCom went out of business and was purchased by another company. This raised concerns that ModUCom would not be able to uphold their existing service agreement with the City, and that they may no longer have a local service representative. Either of these shortfalls would have the potential to greatly impact the department's ability to address service needs and repairs promptly, which is absolutely critical for a dispatching system. The Police Sergeant/Communications Supervisor presented these concerns to the former Chief of Police. With the ongoing planning of the new police facility, the former Chief of Police believed that these issues would be best addressed during the transition into a new police facility, where some level of change and disruption would already be taking place.

In 2020, the ModUCom service agreement expired and staff was concerned that the old equipment may reach the end of its useful life before the police facility project would be completed. Therefore, at that time \$145,000 was budgeted in FY 20/21 for the proposed radio system upgrade. It should be noted that the \$145,000 was an estimate based off of inquiries with a company other than ModUCom, and included only new hardware in the existing police facility (not additional items

such as new cable runs, antennae's, and cable supports). Ultimately, this project was not pursued in that year due to the fact that the police facility project gained significant traction with the purchase of the building at 2600 Newburg Road.

With the police facility remodel project beginning the design phase in late 2020, staff began planning for the future upgrades to the communications system as a component of the larger project. At the onset, it was considered that the communications upgrades would be part of the larger project bid-package (completed by the General Contractor), however, as staff moved through the design process it became clear that the City would be best-served by working directly with a radio communications contractor to design the upgraded system and specify the components based on department needs.

The Fortuna Police Department has a longstanding working relationship with Silke Communications, formerly RWS Services, which has a local technicians in Fortuna. They are the department's local vendor and service provider for all the mobile and portable radios, as well as the department's radio/repeater that allows them to communicate with Ferndale and Rio Dell Police Departments. The company's availability and service has been exceptional and they have been a wealth of knowledge and always willing to help when needed. With all of these items considered, staff felt that continuing to work with Silke Communications for the upgraded radio system was in the City's best interest.

Near the end of the project design phase, staff sought to include the new radio tower at the facility in the bid with the general contractor, and solicited a proposals from Silke to replace the existing radio communications systems. The proposal from Silke includes the radio hardware, caballing and supports, building penetrations, and the new antennae's on the contractor-furnished tower. With the request for proposals, staff considered the following options:

1. Move existing dispatch console equipment into the new facility, and install new wiring and supports where needed.
2. Replace the existing system with a new dispatch console system, including three options listed below. Install new wiring and supports where needed.
 - a. A new ModUCom dispatch console
 - b. A new Mindshare dispatch console
 - c. A new Zetron dispatch console

Silke's proposal is included with this staff report as Attachment A. The proposal is split into Phase 1 and Phase 2 work, where Phase 1 includes the new cabling, supports and antennae's (required for all project alternatives), and redundant HAM radio system, and the Phase 2 work is specific to how the City decided to move forward with the dispatch console hardware (options 2a-c above).

In considering the options, staff quickly ruled out reusing the existing radio equipment. As noted above the hardware is old, and beyond the timeline of any available service contracts. Should the equipment fail anytime in the near future, the City would be required to perform a complete hardware replacement at that time, which ultimately would cost significantly more than replacing the entire system as part of the current project. After deciding to move forward with new dispatch

console system, police department staff performed due diligence by researching each of the systems from ModUCom, Mindshare and Zetron. Vendor presentations were conducted and detailed inquiries were made regarding each system. As a result, it was identified that Mindshare meets the current and future needs of the department and is the lowest cost. The department identified another public safety agency through outside sources that uses the Mindshare Dispatching Console and inquired with their radio technician and dispatch supervisor regarding the system. They had nothing but positive comments, further solidifying the department's recommendation that the City proceed with Mindshare Dispatch Console in Phase 2 of the Silke Communications Solutions proposal. Regarding the overall cost, staff feel that it is competitive with the greater communications market, and overall the costs proposed by Silke are generally in-line with the costs anticipated in 2018 (inflation adjusted).

To proceed with the communications upgrades for of the police facility project, staff recommend that the Council forgo competitive bidding and authorize a sole source contract with Silke Communications to perform the Phase 1 work as identified in the attached proposal, in addition to installing the Mindshare Dispatch Console system outlined in the Phase 2 work. Under Fortuna Municipal Section 2.50.070(D), a procurement of this type can be approved through resolution when the City Council finds that a direct negotiated contract *'best serves the City due to the nature of the supplies, equipment, or contractual services.'* Due to the nature of the work, the need for local support, and the unique ability of Silke to provide local support staff, staff feel confident that moving forward with negotiating a contract directly with Silke is in the best interest of the City. Additionally, it is critical that this contracting effort take place quickly, so that the communications contractor can complete their work during the current construction project. It is expected that negotiating and contracting directly with Silke will allow the police facility project to move forward without delays. Any delay in awarding this work could result in increased costs for installation, or a delay in the overall project schedule. Lastly, staff feel that the cost of the proposal is reasonable, and the City is unlikely to save money by performing a conventional bid procurement. *Resolution 2023-09* has been prepared and included in Attachment B.

If the resolution is approved, staff would immediately move forward in contracting with Silke for the selected work proposed above, and would further coordinate with the project general contractor (Sequoia Construction) on the timing to complete the communications work.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

As shown in the proposal provided by Silke, the cost to complete the selected communications upgrades is \$206,787.86. Staff propose to limit the total contract cost to \$215,000, which would allow for an approximate \$8,000 contingency should field conditions differ from Silke's proposal, or if additional services are required. To fund the improvements, staff would plan to utilize \$80,000 in Asset Seizure funding (Fund 180), and supplement the remaining \$135,000 with General Fund Reserves or Measure E. As sufficient funding is available in the current budget to cover all costs for the communications work performed this fiscal year, staff would plan to allocate the additional funding (Asset Seizure and General Fund/Measure E) as part of the 2023/24 budget process.

As noted in the project contract award presentation for Sequoia Construction in February, staff are anticipating a total project budget (including radio communications upgrades) of up to \$3,325,000. Although the proposed amount for the radio communications increased by approximately \$60,000

(the quote for the communications work was not available at that time), the anticipated cost for the PG&E upgrade is anticipated to be approximately \$50,000 less than projected. As such, staff currently anticipated that moving forward with the proposed communications upgrades will still be within the draft budget presented to the City Council previously, and staff recommends moving forward with the communications work as proposed.

RECOMMENDED COUNCIL ACTION:

1. Receive staff presentation and review Council questions with staff
2. Open Public Comment
3. Close Public Comment
4. Motion adopt *Resolution 2023-09* and read by title only. Roll call vote.

ATTACHMENTS:

- **Attachment A** – Silke Communications Proposal
- **Attachment B** – *Resolution 2023-09, A Resolution Of The City Council Of The City Of Fortuna Authorizing The City Manager To Negotiate A Contract With Silke Communications For The Police Facility Remodel Project Without Formal Competitive Bidding*

Attachment B

RESOLUTION 2023-09

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FORTUNA AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO NEGOTIATE A CONTRACT WITH SILKE COMMUNICATIONS FOR THE POLICE FACILITY REMODEL PROJECT WITHOUT FORMAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING

WHEREAS, the Police Facility Remodel Project is currently under construction;

WHEREAS, as part of the Police Facility Remodel Project, communications improvements will be required;

WHEREAS, the City of Fortuna Police Department currently operates an outdated radio dispatch communication system that is no longer available for technical support or service contracts;

WHEREAS, Police Department staff have identified the need to replace the dispatch radio system in order to maintain proper function of the dispatch system moving forward;

WHEREAS, the Police Department requires a local communications contractor/service provider to ensure timely and efficient services for all the radio communications needs for the Department;

WHEREAS, Silke Communications is the only local service provider for critical radio infrastructure used for emergency dispatching in Fortuna, and they are the historic servicer for all radio equipment in the City of Fortuna;

WHEREAS, the project bid documents included only a new radio communications tower and foundation, and not the work associated with upgrading the radio communications system;

WHEREAS, it was in the best interest of the City to work directly with a radio communications contractor to specify and design the components of the Police Dispatch Radio System;

WHEREAS, awarding a contract for radio communications is critical to ensure all work is completed within the timeline of the construction project;

WHEREAS, formally bidding the communications upgrades could result in a contract with a non-local communications service contractor;

WHEREAS, pursuant to section 2.50.70(D) of the Fortuna Municipal Code, the Council may elect to dispense with formal competitive bidding for the procurement of materials and may instead authorize the City Manager to negotiate directly with the contractor if the Council finds it to be in the public interest; and

WHEREAS, preliminary estimates of the cost to upgrade the radio system is \$215,000.00.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Fortuna City Council of the City of Fortuna hereby:

1. The City Council finds and declares that it is in the public interest to dispense with the formal competitive bidding requirements set forth in Section 2.50.040 of Chapter 2.50 of the Fortuna Municipal Code for the purchase and installation of new radio dispatch equipment for the Police Facility Remodel Project; and
2. The City Manager is authorized to negotiate a contract with Silke Communications for an aggregate amount not to exceed \$215,000; and
3. The City Manager is further authorized to execute and submit all documents including, but not limited to contracts and purchase agreements, which may be necessary for the completion of the aforementioned purchase.

PASSED AND ADOPTED on this 17th day of April 2023, by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT:

Tami Trent, Mayor

ATTEST:

Siana Emmons, City Clerk