



**REPORT TO: CITY COUNCIL**

**MEETING DATE: MARCH 21, 2022**

<b>Agenda Item:</b>	CC-22-39
<b>Prior Council Action/Related Items:</b>	<a href="#">CC-21-235</a>
<b>Background / Issue:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• December 20, 2021 City Council approved the lease purchase of a new digital radio system for police and fire from Motorola Solutions.</li><li>• One of the features of the new radio system is that it allows for the safety/security encryption of police and fire department radio traffic and prevents scanners and phone scanner apps from monitoring public safety radio transmissions.</li><li>• This public safety enhancement is an important component of the new radio system and is not an option with the current system.</li><li>• Some local media object to the safety/security encryption feature and their concerns will be addressed during this meeting.</li></ul>
<b>Proposal/Solution:</b>	<p>Police Chief Jeff Watts and Fire Chief Terry Essary will present to the need for safety/security encryption for public safety.</p> <p>Chief Public Information Officer Dawn Jones will present an overview of the new Media Relations Process. Once finalized, it will be followed to provide factual information promptly.</p> <p>Emergency Operations Director Rob Hill is present to answer technical questions about the new radio system.</p> <p>Following the presentation, staff is available to answer questions and/or provide additional information.</p> <p>Benefits of safety/security encryption:</p>

- Protects officers, emergency responders, and community members from individuals with ill-intentions who listen to scanners to identify officers' location, response route, approximate arrival time, and plans for apprehension. (*cases available*)
- City has an obligation to protect citizens who share sensitive and private personal information on the call for service, including name, date of birth, social security number, address, emergency details, medical history, and other details.
- There is an obligation to protect those in emergencies who are either sharing disturbing and traumatic information about themselves or what they are witnessing. Officers respond to calls for service that are death scenes, medical emergencies, and incidents of personal nature at residences. (*examples available*)
- There is a duty to be reverent to the immediate next of kin and death notification process.
- Prevents theft suspects who are committing crimes from using scanners or scanner apps on cell phones to monitor police activity. (*examples available*)
- Allows law enforcement the potential for a few more minutes to assess the situation and collect factual information without additional distractions. (*examples available*)
- Prevents false information and confusion from being developed or shared based on scanner traffic since information shared in initial calls for service are not necessarily what has occurred and may have been misconstrued.
- Apprehensions with safety/security encryption:
  - ✓ Media and public will not be able to hear SPD and SFD scanner traffic.
  - ✓ Some local media have expressed concerns that without scanners they will not receive information in a timely manner and they question transparency.
- Transparency and Open Records Request:
  - ✓ Citizens may obtain SPD and SFD call logs for calls for service.
  - ✓ Citizens may obtain SPD and SFD radio traffic.
  - ✓ Citizens may obtain SPD video and audio files from current patrol car cameras.
  - ✓ Body worn cameras were approved by Council on December 20, 2021 and, once they are

- received and in use, citizens will be able to obtain SPD body worn camera footage.
- ✓ Citizens may request all SPD and SFD reports related to an incident.
- ✓ Citizens may request additional information from the PIO or CPIO.

CPIO Dawn Jones will present an outline of the new Media Relations Process.

- ✓ Media Alert – PIO will email initial facts that are available, optimally within 10-15 minutes of notification.
- ✓ News Release – PIO will email detailed information on the same day of situation.
- ✓ Social Media – Media alert posted, if applicable to safety and traffic concerns with the community. Updates will be added to post if they are available.
- ✓ Webpage – to include media alerts and news releases.

NOTE: The final process is being developed. Staff are gathering input from local media, other municipalities, and government agencies.

<b>Financial Impact/Funding Source(s):</b>	Funding for this project was approved by Council on December 20, 2021.
<b>Related Strategic Priority:</b>	<p>#1 Effective Service &amp; Accountable Government: To provide effective services and accountable government for all residents by practicing fiscal responsibility, transparency, and outstanding customer service.</p> <p>#3 Safe Community: To promote a safe and secure community for all residents through equitable services, enhanced relationships, and responsive care.</p>
<b>Recommended Action/Motion:</b>	Motion to support the use of safety/security encryption of police and fire department radio traffic with the new public safety radio system.
<b>Prepared By:</b>	Jeff Watts, Chief of Police Terry Essary, Fire Chief Dawn Jones, Chief Public Information Officer
<b>Reviewed By:</b>	Patti Osmus, Assistant to the City Manager
<b>Submitted By:</b>	Norman McNickle, City Manager