

## DEKALB COUNTY SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING

June 19, 2020

The following Council Members were present:

President Richard Ring  
Vice President William VanWye  
Member Eldonna King – ATTENDED ELECTRONICALLY  
Member Robert E. Krafft – ATTENDED ELECTRONICALLY  
Member Martha Grimm  
Member David Yarde  
Member Amy Demske

Others present: Auditor Jan Bauman

Absent: Attorney Donald J Stuckey

*Due to the State's temporary relaxation of meeting rules allowing members to attend the meeting electronically and still be allowed to vote (due to COVID-19), three members chose this option. They are denoted above.*

### **MATTER OF CENTRAL COMMUNICATIONS' MOTOROLA RADIO CONTRACT**

The purpose of this Special Council Meeting is to review the cost of a new Motorola radio system and other equipment for Central Communications and to decide whether to give conditional approval in support of the funding. As long as a tentative agreement is signed by the Commissioners by June 24<sup>th</sup>, Motorola will allow this price which includes a \$100,000 COVID-19 discount. On June 15, 2020, the Commissioners approved the Motorola MCC 7500E Console and Consolette Upgrade contract contingent upon Council's support for funding it. The contract will be signed next Monday only if Council agrees to fund it. The actual request for an additional appropriation cannot be brought before Council for a vote until July 6<sup>th</sup>, after it has been advertised. If the County waited until July 6<sup>th</sup> for a formal vote on the additional appropriation, the June 24 contract deadline would be missed.

Director Brian Humbarger informed the Council that the radio system's end of life cycle will be December 2021 based upon availability of the parts. Replacement parts are scarce and very expensive because they are being snatched up by other counties. After significant research, Mr. Humbarger believes that Motorola is the best vendor to use for value and reliability. The Governance Board supports this purchase. The cost will be \$599,000 and includes the radio replacement of all radios at Central Communications, a radio link to the tower at jail, access control system for doors and gates, and an interface between radio and recorder which is normally extremely expensive. The installation should be complete and operational by the end of the year. The life expectancy is 10-15 years. This purchase will only include radios for DeKalb County Central Communications' employees.

The new Motorola system will become obsolete in 2-3 years. However, Motorola said that at that time they will provide all of the software and hardware necessary to bring the system completely up to date to make it state-of-the-art.

There is another product available called a Zetron at a lesser cost of approximately \$257,000. It is a wireless option. Mr. Humbarger knows only one other county that uses the Zetron but is not happy with the product. The Zetron platform continually upgrades the program they have. The State's system is

built off a Motorola base. Updates would be done automatically for Central Communications with the Motorola system.

The training curve is less for the dispatchers. This is very important when dispatchers are handling stressful situations and then have to rethink what they are doing technologically. They need to have confidence in what they are doing and not be distracted by logistics.

There will be a monthly AT&T charge with the Motorola to connect with the State of approximately \$700-\$1,000, but that can be absorbed with their telecommunications budget. Support cost will cost \$68,000 per year and includes the hardware refresh, software refresh and bringing it to the Access system.

Communications' centers can be each others' back-ups if a system would happen to go down if using Motorola. This cannot happen if the other system is purchased.

Commissioners' President William Hartman spoke and said that the two Commissioners that were present on Monday were in favor of the Motorola radio system. They did not have a lot of information on the other product. He said he is concerned that the current radio system is Motorola and it already needs to be replaced after 8 years. Mr. Humbarger believes that cost was a concern at that time, so they went the "cheap" route. Mr. Hartman is concerned about going the "cheap" route and getting what we paid for.

Steuben, Adams, Lagrange counties are on Motorola. Fort Wayne and Allen County have their own proprietary system.

Ted Hurley from J & K Communications was present and said both systems do the same thing.

Mr. Humbarger knows how important it is to be good stewards of the County's finances and truly believes in the purchase. After researching from which fund this purchase could be paid, Auditor Bauman discussed it with financial advisor Jeff Peters. Mr. Peters agreed that County General has the cash reserves and could handle the payment without having to finance it.

President Ring said that what Mr. Humbarger and Commissioners need today is to know that whichever system they choose, the Council will appropriate the necessary money in the 2021 budget to pay for that radio system. He prefers not to do an appropriation in 2020 if it isn't necessary.

Eldonna King said that it is the Commissioners' job to consider the options and make the best choice for the County. We still need to hold them accountable for whatever choice they make.

Amy Demske suggested possibly selling any critical spare parts we have to another county to help them get by with their current system since we will be purchasing a new one.

William VanWye made a motion to assure the Commissioners that the Council will put in the budget for 2021 the money needed up to \$600,000 depending on which radio system the trusted Commissioners decide for DeKalb County. Martha Grimm seconded. There was more discussion centering around whether the Motorola radio system is worth the extra money and whether there is justification for the additional cost. A roll call vote was taken as shown below. Motion carried.

R. Ring – Aye  
W. VanWye – Aye  
E. King – Aye  
R. Krafft - Aye

M. Grimm - Aye  
D. Yarde – Nay  
A. Demske - Aye

Mr. Yarde qualified his “nay” vote by saying he feels the decision on which system to purchase has already been decided by the Commissioners, and the decision for a new radio system needed to be made in the 11<sup>th</sup> hour.

**MATTER OF ADJOURNMENT**

Amy Demske made a motion to adjourn at 12:18 p.m. Second by David Yarde, and all approved.

DEKALB COUNTY COUNCIL:

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Richard Ring, President

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William VanWye, Vice President

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Eldonna King

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Robert E. Krafft

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Martha Grimm

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David Yarde

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Amy Demske

ATTEST:

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Jan Bauman  
DeKalb County Auditor