


City of Alexandria, Virginia

19
4-22-08

MEMORANDUM

DATE: APRIL 16, 2008

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: JAMES K. HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER 

SUBJECT: AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF ALEXANDRIA AND SPRINT/NEXTEL TO RECONFIGURE THE CITY'S 800MHz RADIO FREQUENCIES

ISSUE: Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Order to Reconfigure the City's 800 MHz Radio Frequencies.

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council authorize the City Manager to execute the 800 MHz Radio Frequency Reconfiguration Agreement between the City of Alexandria and Sprint/Nextel.

DISCUSSION: In 2004, the FCC ordered rebanding of the 800 MHz radio frequencies to eliminate radio interference on those frequencies that results from the close proximity of emergency communications systems operated by public safety agencies to the non-emergency communications systems that Sprint/Nextel operates in those frequencies. Rebanding will separate public safety agencies from Sprint/Nextel's non-emergency systems.

Pursuant to the FCC's order, all local public safety licensees in the 800 MHz band must relinquish their existing channels and relocate their systems to other licensed channels. In exchange for being granted the right to use a larger component of the 800 MHz radio band width, Sprint/Nextel must provide and pay relocation funds to enable affected public safety licensees to relocate their systems onto replacement frequencies. The relocation must be conducted in a manner that enables the public safety licensees to reconfigure their systems so that the new systems are "Comparable Facilities" that function in substantially the same way that the current emergency communications systems operate. The City of Alexandria's 800 MHz frequencies are used to support Police, Fire, Sheriff and other departments within the city. The frequencies are also used to support interoperability with other local, state and federal agencies

The actual work of reconfiguring the City's emergency communications system will be performed by Motorola, the manufacturer of the City's existing radio system. Motorola has estimated that the total cost of reconfiguring the City's system may exceed \$790,000. The FRA provides that this cost will be paid by Sprint Nextel. CTA Communications will manage the entire agreement on behalf of the City. The FRA obligates Sprint Nextel to pay CTA's fees, which have been estimated to be nearly \$440,000. The FRA also requires Sprint Nextel to reimburse the City approximately \$140,000 for City staff time devoted to this project. Sprint/Nextel will also pay the costs that the City has incurred, and may incur in the future, to retain experienced telecommunications counsel to guide the City through this process.

FISCAL IMPACT: The City will be reimbursed for the cost of City staff time that is devoted to the reconfiguration process. Reimbursement for staff time will be \$140,000 over the next 3 years. The cost for CTA to administer this effort (\$440,000) is also paid by Sprint/Nextel. The total cost of reconfiguring the City radio system to another frequency is approximately \$790,000 which will be paid by Sprint/Nextel.

ATTACHMENT: A copy of the agreement will be available for review in the City Manager's Office.

STAFF:

David P. Baker, Chief of Police
Blaine Corle, Deputy Chief of Police
Dale Johnson, Radio Manager
Amy Flenniken, Division Chief, Police