



Legislation Text

File #: 16-4214, **Version:** 1

COWLITZ COUNTY RADIO SYSTEM

COUNCIL STRATEGIC INITIATIVE ADDRESSED:

Enhance public safety and emergency response

CITY ATTORNEY REVIEW: REQUIRED

SUMMARY STATEMENT:

Over the last eighteen months, Cowlitz County Fire District #5 (Kalama) has pursued improvements in radio communications within the jurisdictional territory of CCFD #5 and CCFD #1 (Rural Woodland). During their exploration for a solution they evaluated the current backbone of Cowlitz County's radio system and discovered a number of previously unknown infrastructure problems. As a result of these identified problems, a solution was developed that included securing grant funding from FEMA's Port Security Grant Program.

CCFD #5 and #1 funded the grant's 25% required match of \$450,000. The grant provided funding to develop improvements to the backbone system, which ended up being a NXDN 6.25 Digital Radio System. While it was not part of the initial focus of these improvements, the City of Longview ended up with excellent digital radio system coverage.

While this project was being implemented, the Longview Police Department was also working on improving radio coverage, especially for portable radio communications in areas of the City where it was noted nearly zero coverage; specifically St. John Medical Center, the Longview Police Department, Longview Public School buildings and other locations with similar building types. As part of LPD's exploration for solutions, Cascade Networks made LPD aware of the CCFD #5 project and testing with portable radios began at those problem locations; the result of this testing showed good to excellent coverage at all locations.

Longview Fire and Police Departments conducted further testing in locations such as engine rooms of ships, deep inside industrial work environments, known shadow areas of terrain; once again, the results were surprisingly positive.

The challenge to transferring completely to this new system is our current radio equipment. Longview Police portable radios are approximately three years old and all other radios are at least eight years old. Longview Fire radios are more than ten years old. In addition, they are not digital compatible. Replacement of all radios currently in-service for the fire and police department will cost up to \$160,520 (see chart below). The new radios that we are proposing to purchase are compatible with digital, analog, P25 Phase 1 and trunked radio systems; a complex type of computer-controlled, two-way radio system that allows sharing of relatively few radio frequency channels among a group of users.

The new digital radio system (CCFD #5) work is in the final stages of development and will go live as Cowlitz County Fire District #5 and Cowlitz County work through upgrades at the Rainier Hill tower location.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Motion to approve the purchase of the radio equipment as listed in the attached table.

