



AGENCY: City Council
MEETING DATE: September 9, 2024
DEPARTMENT: Police Department
PRESENTED BY: Chief Neil Cervenka
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AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

TITLE:

RESOLUTION OF THE FORT BRAGG CITY COUNCIL APPROVING AND AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO EXECUTE A CONTRACT WITH THE CITY OF UKIAH, FOR PUBLIC SAFETY DISPATCH SERVICES.

ISSUE:

The current contract with Ukiah for public safety dispatch services has expired and must be renewed. Rising personnel and equipment costs require an increase in contract cost. Public safety dispatching is a required service for the public.

ANALYSIS:

Public Safety Dispatch is a crucial piece of overall public safety. They are the connection between the community in need of emergency response and the emergency responders.

Fort Bragg Police Department has contracted public safety dispatching services for many years. Our most recent contract with Ukiah Police Department has been the most effective and responsive to our needs. We have a cohesive relationship.

Both parties wish to enter into a long-term, five-year contract. This will ease planning for both parties and lock in a standard increase of costs over five years in an amount not to exceed 7%.

Dispatch costs nationally have risen dramatically. There is a shortage of Dispatchers and agencies struggle with recruiting, training, and retaining qualified individuals for this critical role. Developing our own Public Safety Dispatch Center was considered, but will be incredibly cost prohibitive. In fact, the standard across the nation is small dispatch centers are being closed and merged into cooperative regional centers.

Infrastructure costs to build a new dispatch center are estimated to be in the millions of dollars. A proper building, technical work, computers, connections, and software have all risen in cost to near unobtainable levels. The cost of certifying a new dispatch center is also extremely high in equipment and personnel time. It would require a full-time IT staff member for at least a year.

Comparing Ukiah PD and MCSO, the average cost of a single Public Safety Dispatcher including pay and benefits is \$111,495 to \$144,430 annually. A standalone dispatch center would require a minimum of four dispatchers to operate 24 hours per day, with only one person answering 9-1-1, transferring fire and medical calls, and dispatching police. Meaning, a minimally staffed dispatch center would cost \$446,000 to \$577,000 in

personnel costs alone. However, that does not take into account sick days, vacation days, holidays, or any other paid time off. Covering those missing shifts would require additional staffing or a substantial overtime budget.

Ukiah has proposed a cost of \$425,577.64 for FY24/25 with annual increases of \$24,807.45 for the following three fiscal years. Additional increases in FY28/29 and beyond will be capped at 7%. Despite the increases, Ukiah is suffering a loss compared to the true cost of service. They recognize the contract is mutually beneficial and have agreed to sustain that loss.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Approve contract and authorize City Manager to execute.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION(S):

Deny contract.

Request Police Department return with additional information/justification.

FISCAL IMPACT:

FY24/25 cost is \$425,577.64, which was adequately budgeted for in the COFB FY24/25 Adopted Budget. Future budgets will require increases of approximately 6% until FY28/29, when a 7% increase will be required.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

No environmental impacts identified.

IMPLEMENTATION/TIMEFRAMES:

Immediate. No disruption of current services.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment #1 2024 FB Dispatch Contract

NOTIFICATION:

City of Ukiah