



MEETING OF OCTOBER 17, 2023

TO: Mayor Jordan and City Council
THRU: Mike Reynolds, Police Chief
FROM: Kathleen Stocker, Dispatch Manager
DATE:
SUBJECT: **Approval of a resolution to authorize reimbursement to Washington County for 911 equipment and maintenance costs**

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of a resolution to reimburse Washington County for leased 911 equipment in the amount of \$220,000 and up to \$99,000 in annual maintenance costs.

BACKGROUND:

The City of Fayetteville has been part of the Washington County 911 system since 911 was first implemented in Washington County in 1988. This original 911 system was funded from a 5% surcharge on basic local telephone service on all landline phones located inside Washington County. As cell phones emerged and became more popular, there has been an obvious reduction of landline telephone customers in Washington County, and today, the 5% surcharge alone does not produce enough revenue to fund the 911 equipment and maintenance in Washington County.

In 2019, the Arkansas Public Safety Communications and Next Generation 911 Act of 2019 was passed and replaced the Arkansas Public Safety Communication Act of 1985. This act provides a method of funding for political subdivisions, subject to the jurisdiction of the Arkansas 911 Board, which allows the chief executive to implement, operate, and maintain a public safety answering point (PSAP).

This Act also tasked the Arkansas 911 Board with disbursing revenues in the following manner:

- Not less than 83.75% of the total monthly revenues shall be distributed on a population basis to each political subdivision operating a public safety answering point that has the capability of receiving 911 calls on a dedicated 911 trunk line for expenses incurred for answering, routing, and proper disposition of 911 calls, including payroll costs, readiness costs, and training costs associated with wireless, voice over internet protocol (VoIP), and nontraditional 911 calls.
- The population is based on the latest federal decennial census.

Certification with the Board is required on an annual basis. This includes providing an explanation and accounting of funds by the city or county and expenditures of the funds received for the previous calendar year, along with a copy of the budget for the previous calendar year and a copy of the year-end appropriation and expenditure analysis.

2023-1130

Revenue is collected in the following manner:

- Commercial mobile radio services are levied a public safety charge in the amount of \$1.30 per commercial mobile radio service connection that has a place of primary use in the State of Arkansas. (Wireless communication device such as cell phone).
- Nontraditional telephones are levied a public safety charge in an amount of \$1.30 per nontraditional service connection that has a place of primary use within the State of Arkansas.
- Voice over internet protocol is levied a public safety charge in an amount of \$1.30 per month per voice over internet protocol connection that has a place of use in the State of Arkansas.
- Prepaid Wireless charge – for each retail transaction occurring in this state, a seller of prepaid wireless services shall collect 10% of the value of the prepaid wireless service.

Advances in technology, such as wireless devices, have largely replaced landlines. Fees collected from these devices primarily support the funding managed by the Arkansas 911 Board.

DISCUSSION:

Each PSAP (Washington County, Fayetteville, and Springdale), along with the University of Arkansas, handles overflow and default calls and can provide support in emergency situations. As a result, it's critical for the continuity of operations that all three PSAPs, along with the University of Arkansas, remain on the same system; this is why Washington County hosts the 911 system to include the lease agreements for the equipment and maintenance.

Funding from the 2019 Public Safety Act is distributed directly to the City of Fayetteville for their PSAP every quarter. Fayetteville, Springdale, and the University of Arkansas are responsible for reimbursing Washington County for their share of the 911 system, including maintenance and equipment costs.

The equipment lease with Washington County is reimbursed and renewed every five years, and a maintenance fee is reimbursed to them annually over this five-year term.

BUDGET/STAFF IMPACT:

The Fayetteville Central Dispatch Center has \$220,000 for leasing the equipment and \$99,000 annual maintenance costs in the approved 2023 operating budget for this expense.

ATTACHMENTS: SRF (#3), Memo 911 DCOP Recommendations (#4), Patrick Deakins Memo (#5), AT&T Invoice (#6)