



Date	Wednesday, June 10, 2020
From	Anne Marie Shaw, Interim CAO
Subject	Fire Communications Project
Report	No. CAO2020-10

Recommendation

That report CAO2020-10 regarding an enhanced fire communications system a be considered;

And That the Township of Georgian Bluffs participate in the enhanced fire communications system and support the on-going administration and maintenance costs of the system.

Background

In 2018, Grey County Fire Chiefs identified paging and radio communications shortcomings which were interfering with firefighters' ability to communicate with dispatch and each other on scene, creating a life safety issue. Meetings were held to discuss possible solutions. Funds are available through the Municipal Modernization Fund and the Connected County reserve at the County level.

Information was brought to a number of Inter Township Meetings and the Acting Deputy Chief was in attendance at County meetings regarding the Enhanced Fire Communications Project.

The County hired consultant Dan Perlstein to assess the situation and provide recommendations. Recommendations are summarized below from the August 2019 report:

- The Grey County fire departments are presently operating many different systems for paging and communication using low-frequency radio channels in the VHF range.

- There are gaps in coverage, communication conflicts and inconsistent processes. This could result in response delays, missed communications, injuries to fire personnel or the public. Municipalities are exposed to increased liability.
- As these systems do not adequately serve the operational needs of the fire departments they need to be replaced with a modern, unified paging infrastructure and a modern voice radio infrastructure, complemented by the required subscriber equipment (mobile & portable radios, vehicular repeaters, etc.).

. Project requirements to improve the system are:

1. Optimize paging to get firefighters to the scene: implement a Paging System with a coverage footprint of 95% of the county including low-rise buildings, private homes, one story plazas, etc.
2. Enable improved communication with dispatch, and with other Fire Services during mutual aid events: To implement a system that will deliver a mobile radio coverage footprint to 95% of the county, 95% of the time.
3. Bring all equipment to the same standard: To acquire mobile radios, portable radios and vehicular repeaters (VRs) to replace existing subscriber equipment that is not compatible with the scope of the project.
4. Provide cost effective, efficient system operation and administration: To secure the provision of support, maintenance, management and administration for a period of minimum 10 years, including a two (2)-year warranty period for all the delivered goods

Analysis

On May 28, 2020, Grey County Council supported the award of RFP CAO-01-20 for the delivery of an enhanced fire communications system to Telequip Systems Ltd. of Barrie, Ontario.

The total expenditure for the Enhanced Fire Communications project is \$1,648,192 and will be covered by funds from the Municipal Modernization Funded Reserve and the Connected County Reserve. The \$1,648,192 will cover the costs of the infrastructure, hardware, software, technical resources necessary to implement the enhanced system. The enhanced system

provides more capacity to allow for fire services interoperability and future growth for integration of other public safety services (police, paramedic services) and public works.

On-going administration and maintenance costs of the system are to be supported by the local municipalities participating in the project.

This is a 10-year project. Every year there will be a cost for tower rental, system administration (adding/removing users, programming devices, liaison with Telequip), frequency licensing fees. This is estimated at about \$125,000 in years one and two and will be billed out to each municipality on a per radio basis. Beginning in year 3 when the voice and paging infrastructure is no longer covered under warranty, there will be an increase of about \$30,000 to cover preventative service and technical support and maintenance for all infrastructure components.

		Annual Cost	Annual Cost
		Years 1 +2	Years 3-8
Department	Total Radios	\$125,000	\$155,000
Southgate	24	\$10,752.69	\$13,333.33
Hanover	25	\$11,200.72	\$13,888.89
Chatsworth	22	\$9,856.63	\$12,222.22
Grey Highlands	42	\$18,817.20	\$23,333.33
Meaford	38	\$17,025.09	\$21,111.11
ITFD	36	\$16,129.03	\$20,000.00
West Grey	67	\$30,017.92	\$37,222.22
Owen Sound	25	\$11,200.72	\$13,888.89
	279	\$125,000	\$155,000.00

Funds for this project will be supported by the Inter Township Fire Department Budget.

Conclusion

Participation and support for the enhanced fire communication project to improve interoperability among fire departments will allow firefighter's the ability to communicate with dispatch and each other on scene.

Supporting Documentation

Respectfully Submitted:

Anne Marie Shaw

Interim CAO