



Legislation Text

File #: 2024-0001, **Version:** 1

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Department: Information Technology

STAFF RECOMMENDATION (Motion Ready):

Approve the use of the State of Florida Department of Management Services cooperative purchasing agreement with AT&T Wireless for mobile communications services with FirstNet Authority with an estimated aggregate expenditure of \$1,401,151

OCALA'S RELEVANT STRATEGIC GOALS:

Operational Excellence

PROOF OF PUBLICATION:

N/A

BACKGROUND:

The City of Ocala has an ongoing need for a variety of mobile communication devices that utilize wireless services, including phones, smartphones, air cards, and tablets. To maximize best value, the City of Ocala has utilized mobile communication services contracts procured and negotiated by the State of Florida Department of Management Services ("DMS") since 2013. The most recent DMS contract, Contract No. DMS-19/20-006C, was awarded to Cellco Partnership d/b/a Verizon Wireless on August 24, 2021 and will expire on August 23, 2026.

On May 17, 2022, City Council was presented with Informational Agenda Item 2022-0688, which was intended to advise Council of the Police Department and Fire Department's decision to transition its mobile communication devices to AT&T/First Responder Network Authority ("FirstNet") for wireless service. This decision was based on a comprehensive testing period during which the respective download speeds, upload speeds, and network latency of Verizon, T-Mobile, and FirstNet were thoroughly compared.

On July 20, 2023, additional testing was initiated by Ocala Electric Utility to compare coverage and quality of service between Verizon and FirstNet within the utility territory. Upon completion of a 60-day trial, Ocala Electric Utility concluded that its cellphone and data services should also be transferred from Verizon to FirstNet.

The State of Florida's DMS contract with AT&T/FirstNet, Contract No. DMS-19/20-006A, was awarded on August 4, 2021. The contract will expire on August 3, 2026. The below tables represent estimated costs for

user lines and user devices for the initial term of the agreement:

User Lines

AT&T FirstNet Authority Lines				
Line	Department	Devices	Est. Monthly Billing	Est. Term Cost
1	Ocala Police	542	\$ 21,610.55	\$ 756,369.25
2	Ocala Fire	52	\$ 1,968.13	\$ 68,884.55
3	Ocala Electric Utility	121	\$ 4,868.03	\$ 170,381.05
4	Water Resources	5	\$ 199.95	\$ 6,998.25
5	Public Works	19	\$ 664.81	\$ 23,268.35
6	Code Enforcement	16	\$ 599.84	\$ 20,994.40
7	Security Guard Force	5	\$ 224.50	\$ 7,857.50
8	Facilities	12	\$ 419.88	\$ 14,695.80
	Total	772	\$ 30,555.69	\$ 1,069,449.15

User Devices

AT&T FirstNet Authority Devices			
Line	Department	Devices	Total
1	Ocala Electric Utility	57	\$ 32,489.43
2	Ocala Police	24	\$ 34,578.75
2	Facilities	12	\$ 6,839.88
3	Public Works	19	\$ 10,829.81
4	Code Enforcement	8	\$ 4,559.92
	Total	120	\$ 89,297.79

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS:

FirstNet is a nationwide public safety communications platform created through a partnership between AT&T and the First Responder Network Authority. Its mission is to establish and maintain a secure, high-speed wireless broadband network dedicated to first responders, equipping them with 21st-century tools for faster, informed decision-making.

Benefits of AT&T FirstNet Authority service include:

- **Purpose-built network enhancements:** FirstNet has enhanced its network in Florida using high-quality Band 14 spectrum, reserved exclusively for public safety. This "VIP lane" can be cleared for FirstNet subscribers during emergencies.
- **Public safety-specific advanced capabilities:** FirstNet offers dedicated access, mission-centric devices, certified applications, always-on priority, preemption, and high-quality Band 14 spectrum, ensuring faster and unthrottled connectivity.
- **Emergency support:** Florida agencies on FirstNet have 24 hours a day, seven days a week access to a

fleet of deployable network assets, aiding first responders in staying connected and operating effectively during planned events or emergencies at no extra cost.

As a political subdivision of the state of Florida, the City of Ocala qualifies as an eligible user of Florida DMS agreements under Rule 60A-1.001, Florida Administrative Code. Departmental use of these devices and services is expected to continue to increase. Utilizing the attached agreement enables the City to continue to leverage the purchasing power of the State of Florida and take advantage of the lowest governmental pricing available. This contract is not exclusive, and the City may elect to award contracts to additional carriers in the future as needs arise.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Between 09/21/2021 and 09/12/2023 OPD and OFR have collectively expended \$231,701.37 on devices and services with FirstNet under their respective communications expense accounts.

Utilizing departments have cellular and data charges in their department expense accounts for their operating budget.

The costs per line for FirstNet start at \$39.99 + fees for voice and \$34.99 + fees for data.

Purchases in the estimated amount of \$1,069,449.15 for line charges will be tracked under Munis Contract No.: #ITS/240014.

Purchases in the estimated amount of \$100,000.00 for equipment will be tracked under Munis Contract No.: #ITS/240021.

As department contracts expire with Verizon, IT staff will determine the feasibility of transition of additional lines and devices to FirstNet.

PROCUREMENT REVIEW:

These goods and services have been procured in compliance with the City's Procurement Policy.

LEGAL REVIEW:

This Agreement will be reviewed and approved for form and legality by City Attorney, William E. Sexton.

ALTERNATIVE:

- Approve with Changes
- Table
- Deny