



## KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH

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DAVID R. CAREY  
BOROUGH MAYOR

### MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Gary Knopp, Assembly President  
Members, Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly

**THRU:** David R. Carey, Mayor *DRC by City*  
Craig Chapman, Finance Director *C Chapman*  
Mark Fowler, Purchasing and Contracting Officer *M Fowler*

**FROM:** Eric Mohrmann, Emergency Management Director *em*

**DATE:** April 7, 2011

**SUBJECT:** Resolution 2011-040, allocating available funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) for the purpose of supporting the public safety radio narrow banding

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The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has mandated that the band-width frequency of all radios be reduced from the current 25 megahertz to 12.5 megahertz by January 1, 2013.

The public safety departments located on the Kenai Peninsula use a number of analog and digital frequencies for their everyday responses and activities. These are known as legacy radio frequencies. This is separate from the Alaska Land Mobile Radio (ALMR) system that already meets the narrow-band requirements.

The legacy radio frequencies are used because they have better penetration into buildings. Pager systems used by fire and EMS departments do not operate on the ALMR system. The legacy radio frequencies also offer an alternative to ALMR if that system fails. Finally, should a per-radio maintenance charge be initiated by ALMR to first responders, the legacy radio frequencies offer a low-cost communication method to the first responders that cannot afford additional costs for annual radio maintenance fees.

If the public safety departments make individual uncoordinated efforts to convert their radio systems to comply with the FCC mandate, the departments will not be able to communicate with dispatch centers or each other and will have to reprogram each radio every time that a neighboring department makes a change in its frequencies.

Inquiries were made to the grant administrators, and authorization was received to use the remaining grant funds to facilitate the coordinated conversion of public safety radios to become narrow-band compliant. The actual amount remaining will not be known until we are closer to the go-live date for the computer-aided dispatch (CAD) project (estimated as August, 2011). An appropriate reserve for the CAD project will be retained to ensure completion of that project.

The narrow-band project will hire a contractor to:

- facilitate radio license modifications including payment of fees and letters of authorization;
- determine what radio equipment (peninsula wide) is capable and incapable of being brought into narrow-band compliance;
- develop frequency programming for each department ensuring interoperability;
- reprogram all radios in a coordinated fashion to minimize communication disruptions;
- review and recommend needed changes to the existing borough legacy radio repeater system operation as a back-up to the ALMR system; and
- train department personnel to reprogram their radios and provide the necessary hardware and software to accomplish these actions.

A request for proposals (RFP) has been developed and was released April 1, 2011.

Since this is a peninsula-wide communications issue, participation and support of the cities and non-fire service area public safety entities is critical to the program. Some cities and fire service areas have budgeted funds to work towards compliance.

The amount of \$1,493,997 was previously appropriated for the computer aided dispatch (CAD) project, however, the total estimated cost of the CAD project is projected to be \$943,997 leaving \$550,000 available for the reallocation to be used in the narrow banding project.

Any remaining funds from the grant can be used for purchase of radio equipment necessary to replace existing equipment that cannot be reprogrammed for narrow-band compliance. The working group that is overseeing this project will make recommendations to the Borough Mayor following completion of the inventory review by the contractor.

Due to the short amount of time available between the review by the contractor of the inventory and the end of the grant performance period, the purchase of the radio equipment must be expedited. A standard bid process would consume too much time to meet the grant termination deadline. Therefore, this resolution requests authorization to purchase the radio equipment through the Western States Contracting Alliance (WSCA) Category 1 Public Safety Radios program.

The WSCA program solicits bids on equipment from multiple vendors and establishes a purchasing program that would assist in the elimination of any delays associated with a standard bid process. The State of Alaska is a participant in the WSCA program and the Kenai Peninsula Borough is authorized to use this program.

To ensure the best value is attained the borough will consider criteria other than cost. Some of the criteria to be considered in the evaluation of the equipment is as follows:

- The product must be capable of complying with narrow-band transmission mandates. Pagers must be compatible with narrow-band transmitters. **Mandatory**
- The product must be P-25 complaint.
- The product must be **capable** of being upgraded at a later date to allow operation on the Alaska Land Mobile Radio (ALMR) trunk system. Operating on the ALMR trunk system **is not** intended to be part of this project.
- The product must meet MIL-Spec STD810 C/D/E & F.
- Portables must have a minimum output of 5 watts. Mobile radios must have a minimum output of 35 watts.
- Portable and mobile radios must have a minimum of 48 channel capacity.
- The products must be able to be field programmed by use of appropriate software and connection cables.
- Service of the products by an authorized agent must be available on site for base stations and mobile radios.
- Cost of the product(s).

FINANCE DEPARTMENT FUNDS VERIFIED	
	\$
Acct. No.	<u>455.53110.ASFTY.49999</u>
Amount	<u>\$ 550,000 <sup>00</sup></u>
By:	<u>C Chapman</u> Date: <u>4/7/2011</u>