TO: HONORABLE CITY COUNCIL

FROM: CITY MANAGER DEPARTMENT: POLICE

DATE: April 1, 2002 CMR: 191:02

SUBJECT: APPROVAL OF AMENDED JOINT FUNDING AGREEMENT RELATED TO COUNTYWIDE RADIO INTEROPERABILITY AND PUBLIC SAFETY DATA COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK PROJECT

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Council authorize the City Manager to execute an amended Joint Funding Agreement with other Santa Clara County cities for the purpose of establishing a Radio Interoperability and Public Safety Data Communications Network.

BACKGROUND

On June 4, 2001, the City Council authorized the City Manager to execute a Joint Funding Agreement (JFA) with other Santa Clara County cities for consulting services to solve radio and data interoperability issues between public safety agencies (CMR 245:1, Attachment B). Like many jurisdictions across the nation, Santa Clara County public safety agencies are experiencing a number of performance issues associated with the inefficient and untimely exchange of information, a lack of inter-agency field communication, and unnecessarily long call processing times. These limitations severely impact the delivery of timely and quality law enforcement, fire and emergency medical services.

As part of developing an implementation strategy for the project, the network participants hired William L. Doolittle and Associates. Upon receipt of the first major project deliverable in late July 2001, it became evident the consultant would not be able to meet the objectives set forth in the professional services agreement and that it lacked the level of expertise necessary to complete the scope of work for the project. After repeated attempts to improve the quality of the work
product, the Communications Steering Committee, on behalf of the network participants, terminated the agreement with Doolittle & Associates.

In the meantime, the Steering Committee became aware of new emergent technology: a “black box” hardware solution that was being used by the U.S. military and federal law enforcement agencies (Secret Service, NSA and FBI) to assist with radio interoperability. The hardware is just now being marketed as an interoperability solution to local public safety agencies. Project Staff are currently evaluating the feasibility of using this technology to solve local interoperability issues and identify any technical issues this type of technology might have.

In November 2001, the Communication Steering Committee (the oversight committee for the project) received authorization to proceed with the project using in-house staff from the participating agencies. It seemed clear that, given the expertise within local jurisdictions to analyze and design the system, and the apparent availability of this new hardware, the use of available funds was better spent on solving the problem as opposed to hiring another consultant to design the system.

**DISCUSSION**

The amended JFA provides the flexibility needed to research new technology, analyze the various alternatives for both the radio and data interoperability network and, as appropriate, implement the solutions.

For the radio portion of the project, the amended agreement provides the Communications Steering Committee with the authority to purchase equipment and utilize the services of an outside contractor to install the equipment. Individual agency radio technicians can complete some of the radio infrastructure work on the hardware purchased as part of the project; modifications or enhancements needed to optimize system coverage and installation services can be obtained from an outside contractor.

The other portion of the project includes the development of a data network that would allow interoperability between public safety dispatch centers and field personnel throughout the county. Data sharing has become an even more important priority for public safety and justice agencies since the events of September 11. Although current technical staff has the expertise to work through issues for the data network, the amended JFA provides the Steering Committee with the authority to hire outside professionals to assist in finalizing the network design should it become necessary.
Along with periodic project updates to County Police and Fire and the County/Cities Managers’ Association, the network participants will be provided with an implementation strategy that clearly delineates the equipment which will be purchased, deployment and installation strategies and a final project timetable.

**RESOURCE IMPACT**

Each participating jurisdiction made an equal contribution of $19,500. Of the $371,000 accumulated for the project, approximately $70,000 was paid to Doolittle & Associates for its work on the project (in accordance with the contract), leaving a balance of $300,000. Remaining funds will be used to purchase equipment. In addition, the Communications Steering Committee is working with the Department of Justice and other state and federal agencies to seek alternative funding should it be required for the full implementation of this project.

No additional appropriation of monies by the City Council is required at this time.

**POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

This agreement is consistent with existing City policy.

**TIMELINE**

The timeline to complete the first phase of this project remains on schedule and should be completed by January 2003.

**ENVIRONMENTAL REQUIRED**

Any environmental impact under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) will be determined in subsequent phases of the project.
Attachment A: Amended Santa Clara County Data and Radio Communications Joint Funding Agreement

Attachment B: CMR 245:01 – June 4, 2001

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