



CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT



November 1, 2022

ITEM TITLE

Grant Award, Appropriation, and Purchase: Accept and Appropriate Grant Funds From Cal OES for a High-Frequency Communications Equipment Program and Authorize the Purchase of Radio Equipment

Report Number: 22-0277

Location: No specific geographic location

Department: Fire

Environmental Notice: The Project qualifies for a Categorical Exemption pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act State Guidelines Section 15301 Class 1 (Existing Facilities) and Section 15303 class 3 (New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures).

Recommended Action

Adopt a resolution accepting \$55,764 in grant funds from the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES), appropriating the funds to the supplies and services category of the Fire Grants Section of the State Grants Fund for a high-frequency communications equipment program, and authorizing the purchase of radio equipment. **(4/5 Vote Required)**

SUMMARY

The purpose of the High Frequency Communications Equipment (FH) Program is to provide funding to Alerting Authorities for equipment that will allow local governments to be included in an integrated high frequency radio network service that utilizes frequencies authorized by the Federal Communications Commission and intended to be capable of communications with state, local, and federal agencies.

Funds shall be used for the procurement of high frequency communication equipment needed to interface and communicate with the high frequency communication system which may include:

- High frequency radio, antenna, cabling, power source, radio combiners, radio interface for existing radio consoles;
- Installation costs for high frequency communications equipment;
- Site visits, shipping, and any applicable taxes; and
- Training on the use the high frequency equipment

Cal OES has selected award recipients to purchase communications equipment that will be a reliable redundancy during emergencies.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The Director of Development Services has reviewed the proposed project for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and has determined that the project qualifies for a Categorical Exemption pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15301 Class 1 (Existing Facilities) and Section 15303 class 3 (New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures) because the proposed actions would not result in a significant effect on the environment. Thus, no further environmental review is required.

BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

Not applicable

DISCUSSION

Emergency preparedness is a pillar of public safety and the City of Chula Vista is dedicated to providing the highest levels of public safety to its communities. The State of California Governor’s Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) has presented the City with a grant funding opportunity to invest in alternative emergency communications equipment to enhance preparedness and response capabilities.

Reliable communications are integral to the effectiveness and success of emergency response operations. Ensuring that the City of Chula Vista has reliable primary, secondary, and tertiary communications methods is a precursory first step in preparing the City for emergency response. High frequency radio equipment operates on a different radio communications infrastructure than the standard 800 MHz or VHF radios. While phones and 800 MHz radios are the primary forms of communication, high frequency radios are a reliable redundancy.

National security and emergency preparedness (NS/EP) personnel need to transmit critical messages to coordinate emergency operations even when traditional means of communicating via landlines and cellphones are damaged or destroyed. The SHARED RESOURCES (SHARES) High Frequency (HF) Radio Program, administered by the Department of Homeland Security’s (DHS) National Coordinating Center for Communications (NCC), provides an additional means for users with a NS/EP mission to communicate when landline and cellular communications are unavailable.

SHARES members use existing HF radio resources to coordinate and transmit emergency messages. SHARES users rely on HF radio communications to perform critical functions, including those areas related to leadership, safety, maintenance of law and order, finance, and public health. This program also provides the emergency response community with a single interagency emergency message handling and frequency sharing system. SHARES promotes interoperability between HF radio systems and promotes awareness of applicable regulatory, procedural, and technical issues.

More than 3,290 HF radio stations—representing over 590 federal, state, and industry organizations located in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and several locations overseas—are resource contributors to the SHARES HF Radio Program. Nearly 500 emergency planning and response personnel participate in SHARES. Approximately 200 HF radio channels are available for use by SHARES members.

The purpose of the High Frequency Communications Equipment (FH) Program is to provide funding to Alerting Authorities for equipment that will allow local governments to be included in an integrated high frequency radio network service that utilizes frequencies authorized by the Federal Communications Commission and intended to be capable of communications with state, local, and federal agencies.

The City of Chula Vista is coordinating with Cal OES for the purchase of high frequency radio equipment that is a complete “turn key” station to operate on the SHARES HF Radio Program and the Cal OES STACOM (State Communications System) HF (2-8MHz) which is designed to provide point-to- point emergency radio communications coverage across the state of California. This system implements the FCC "State Emergency Capability Using Radio Effectively" (“Operation SECURE”) capability and is licensed and operated in accordance with FCC Rules Part 90 - Private Land Mobile Services and in accordance with FCC Public Notice 2419 to the State of California.

DECISION-MAKER CONFLICT

Staff has reviewed the decision contemplated by this action and has determined that it is not site-specific and consequently, the real property holdings of the City Council members do not create a disqualifying real property-related financial conflict of interest under the Political Reform Act (Cal. Gov’t Code § 87100, et seq.).

Staff is not independently aware and has not been informed by any Chula Vista City Council member, of any other fact that may constitute a basis for a decision-maker conflict of interest in this matter.

CURRENT-YEAR FISCAL IMPACT

Approval of this resolution will result in a one-time appropriation of \$55,764 to the Supplies & Services category of the Fire Grants Section of the State Grants Fund. The funding from Cal OES will completely offset these costs, therefore, there is no net fiscal impact to the City.

ONGOING FISCAL IMPACT

There is no ongoing fiscal impact for accepting these grant funds.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Cal OES Notification of Grant Subaward Application Approval

Staff Contact: Marlon King, Emergency Services Manager