Item # 28
Date: April 8, 2008

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: AWARD OF CONTRACT FOR CITY-WIDE MASS EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM

BACKGROUND:

The City of Ames installed the current outdoor storm warning system in 1974 and enhanced it in 1980. In 2004, Electric Services began a program to upgrade the aging system over a period of several years by changing sirens out one or two each year. It was later determined to be an ineffective way to upgrade our system as it would take a decade or more to complete and the sirens and siren technology could change considerably from the beginning to the end of the program.

The approved FY 2008/09 Capital Improvement Plan includes $215,000.00 for sirens, command software, training, one stand-alone computer, and siren installation by City staff (miscellaneous materials and labor). Recent events at Virginia Tech have prompted Iowa State University to install an outdoor voice-capable notification system on its campus. The upgrade of the City's system combined with ISU's need for a voice-capable system, with redundant command capabilites at both entities' dispatch centers, have upgraded the scope of this project from an "Outdoor Storm Warning System" to an integrated "Mass Emergency Communications System."

A Request for Proposal was issued jointly by the City of Ames and Iowa State University with the goal of procuring a fully integrated mass communications system consisting of voice-capable sirens for the ISU campus, mechanical rotating sirens for the City, and identical command software/hardware at both Iowa State University's Department of Public Safety and the City's Police dispatch centers. Each bidder was asked to submit a "sound study" as a part of their proposal. A sound study determines the best location for sirens by factoring conditions such as ambient noise levels, topography, and the proposed siren's decibel power.

Bids for these materials were received on February 29, 2008, as shown on the attached report. An evalutaion committee consisting of staff members of Iowa State University and the City of Ames reviewed the proposals on March 7 and March 14, 2008. Cost evaluation for the City of Ames is based on the actual cost of the proposed sirens, upgraded radio equipment (if needed), one set of command software, and training. City staff will install sirens purchased by the City. Proposals for Iowa State University include these components, plus installation costs for each siren. Using a weighted criteria scale, it was determined that the proposal submitted by Federal Signal Corporation, University Park, Illinois, most closely met the goals for a fully integrated mass communication system.

The submission from RC Systems, Waterloo, Iowa, proposes to keep the five newest Federal Signal sirens and replace older models with seven new sirens manufactured by American Signal. RC System's sound study indicates several areas in the City that

would no longer be covered by siren sound, such as the industrial area of Dayton north of Lincoln Way and the far west end of Lincoln Way (Hillside and Sunset Ridge subdivisions). RC System's proposal to Iowa State is for 12 sirens on campus, which would create significantly higher "owner costs" to ISU for pole installation and maintenance. Because each manufacturer's two-way communication system is proprietary, a "mixed system" would not fully integrate. Regardless of which manufactuer's command software is purchased, any other manufacturer's siren in the City and/or campus, even if it is fitted with new radio equipment, would not fully communicate with the software and the ability to remotely monitor the system would be limited.

The submission by Federal Signal Corporation proposes to keep the five newest sirens and replace older models with ten new Federal Signal sirens. Its sound study covered the city of Ames in its entirety. Installation costs for the City of Ames would be minimized as its sound study replaces sirens at current locations for seven of the ten new sirens. Federal Signal Corporation also brought a mobile version of the voice-capable Modulator siren to Ames and tested it at several locations on the Iowa State campus and its proposal to Iowa State University is for five voice-capable sirens.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Award a contract for the purchase of ten Federal Signal sirens, command software, and software training to Federal Signal Corporation, University Park, Illinois, for $152,441.50. This will be compatible with the Federal Signal voice-capable sirens and command software/hardware to be purchased by Iowa State University for a fully integrated system. Installation of the sirens would be completed by Electric Services Department staff. Required computer hardware and installation would be performed separately.

2. Award a contract for the purchase of seven American Signal sirens and control software from RC Systems at $95,582.17. Iowa State would then purchase and control its own Federal Signal system. There would be no redundancy between the two dispatch centers.

3. Reject all proposals and the City will continue to operate the current system and replace sirens as needed.

MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

This purchase will provide for an integrated, remotely monitored mass communication system for the City of Ames and Iowa State University.

Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council adopt Alternative No. 1, thereby approving the award of contract to Federal Signal Corporation, University Park, Illinois, in the amount of $152,441.50, for the purchase of ten Federal Signal rotating sirens, command software, and software training for the Police dispatch center.

Mass Communications RFP Vendor Selection Matrix									
1.9	Evaluation Criteria	Weight	Federal Signal	Federal Signal (Ames Eval)	RC Systems #1 (Ames Eval)	RCSystems #1 American Signal	Fesler	RCSystems#2 Acoustic Tech	Washington Electronics
1.9.1	Cost of components	8	10	5	10	7	6	4	Non-compliant response
1.9.2	Proposed solution	8	10	10	6	7	6	7	
1.9.3	Ability to meet timelines	4	10	10	10	10	10	10	
1.9.4	References	5	10	10	10	8	8	8	
1.9.5	Demonstrated ability to provide services	5	10	10	10	10	10	10	
1.9.6	Company profile	5	10	10	10	10	10	10	
1.9.7	Results of any requested oral presentations or written clarifications	7	10	10	10	10	10	10	
1.9.8	Capabilities of solution/Upgradeability of components	8	10	10	10	10	10	10	
1.9.9	Warranty/Repair options	5	10	10	10	10	10	10	
1.9.10	Exceptions taken to the RFP Proposal Documents and the Terms and Conditions	8	10	10	10	10	10	10	
1.9.11	Compliance with the specifications and capabilities in the Scope of Work	9	10	10	10	10	10	10	
1.9.12	Owner costs	8	10	10	8	5	5	5	
1.9.13	Sound Study	7	10	10	7	7	7	7	
	Overall Score:		**870**	**809**	**801**	**751**	**735**	**727**	**0**

Comments

1.9.1 Rated based on differences in cost - lower rating for higher costs.
Fesler also wants to supervise each installation and has a charge for each. This penalizes the city as they will install one at a time as resources permit.
RC Systems are more expensive for us-gave the city a price lower than the others

1.9.2 Fesler is unable to activate existing city equipment and would require a complete replacement of all equipment.
Federal Signal can activated individually from the pole
Fesler doesn't have computer communication.
RC Systems are able to use some of the city's existing equipment.
RC suggested mounting to buildings and the stadium scoreboard.

1.9.4 Each cited towns and colleges.
Federal Signal cites what they did at each location which adds to context.

1.9.9 Fesler and Federal Signal both have 2 years for hardware.
Federal Signal has 1 year of support for software
Federal Signal has on-site repair for 60 days
RC has 2 year on electonics/5 on siren head-pay for labor and travel

1.9.12 Fesler solution has more sirens which means more poles to put up.
RC has more sirens which means more poles to install.

1.9.13 Federal Signal came on campus and tested product for signal strength.
Federal Signal mapped for topography, not just distance.

Bidder	**City Wide Mass Emergency Communication System**	City Wide Mass Emergency Communication System with solar panel option	Notes	Iowa State University Voice Capable System	**Iowa State University Voice Capable System with Solar Option**	Notes	Total Project Cost with City and ISU option choices
RC Systems, Waterloo IA	95,582.17	108,389.17	7 new American Signal rotating sirens, 2 way communication, upgraded software/hardware	190,667.92	203,477.92	12 American Signal Sirens, voice capable	$ 299,060.09
Federal Signal Corporation, University Park, Illinois	**152,441.50**	199,986.25	**10 new Federal Signal rotating sirens, 2 way communication, AC/DC with battery backup, upgraded software / hardware**	136,526.85	**152,375.10**	5 Federal Signal Modulator Sirens, 2 way communication, voice message capable	**$ 304,816.60**
Fesler's, North Liberty IA	N/A	219,461.60	12 Whelen Rotating Sirens, 2 way communication	N/A	216,257.50	5 Whelen Omnidirectional Sirens, 2 way communication, voice message capable	$ 435,719.10
RC Systems, Waterloo IA	195,088.22	N/A	13 Acoustic Technology, Inc Speaker Stations	261,430.76	N/A	14 Acoustic Technology, Inc Speaker Station, no software/hardware offered	$ 456,518.98
Washington Electronics, Pittsburg KS			Whelen Sirens - No price offer made to City of Ames	303,162.80		11 Whelen Sirens voice message capable	N/A

CAF APPROVAL

SS _____ BK _____ SL _____

DM _____ JP _____

To be sent to:

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