

ITEM#: 7
DATE: 10-26-21

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: AGREEMENT WITH PRIORITY DISPATCH FOR POLICE COMMUNICATIONS CENTER QUALITY ASSURANCE SERVICES

BACKGROUND:

The Ames Police Department Communications Center provides Emergency Medical Dispatching (EMD). EMD provides a critical lifeline support by using predetermined medical protocols to both dispatch correct resources to an emergency scene and to give instructions to victims and bystanders before the arrival of first responders. **Dispatchers utilize ProQA to provide the EMD service. ProQA is a service from Priority Dispatch that uses adaptive software to provide the dispatcher a script that best assists the caller/patient.** The script utilizes International Academies of Emergency Dispatch (IAED) protocols.

Priority Dispatch also provides a quality assurance service. The City currently utilizes this service to perform quality assurance review on emergency medical and fire dispatch calls. This review ensures dispatchers are providing the highest quality service to the community. Originally, this quality assurance work was performed by a part-time Police Department employee. However, several years ago it was transitioned to a contracted service, which provides more consistent quality assurance at a lower cost.

The quality assurance service is currently contracted six months at a time. A pre-determined number of calls are reviewed at a cost of \$19 per call. Priority Dispatch determines the number of calls to review based on the agency size and the number of medical calls received each year. Under the six-month contracts, the cost-per-call has increased with each contract period. City staff is now proposing to enter into a multi-year subscription agreement which would lock in the cost-per-call review at \$19 for the next five years. Either party may terminate the agreement with a 60-day notice.

Although the cost-per-call would not increase during that five-year period, the number of calls to be reviewed would increase. The number of calls to be reviewed is established in the agreement each year and will not vary, even if the number of actual calls for service increases significantly. Therefore, the annual contract costs are as follows:

Year	Calls Reviewed	Cost
1	1,300	\$ 24,700
2	1,300	24,700
3	1,380	26,220
4	1,380	26,220
5	1,452	27,588
TOTAL	6,812	\$ 129,428

Year 1 of the agreement begins upon approval of the agreement by the City. The Police Department budget includes \$23,400 in funding for the current year. The \$1,300 shortfall will be financed from salary savings from vacant police positions. The funds required for subsequent years will be included in the department budget.

Because the Medical ProQA service used by dispatchers is proprietary, Priority Dispatch is the only company that is able to provide quality assurance review of the calls. Therefore, awarding a contract to Priority Dispatch for quality assurance must be done as a single-source purchase rather than through soliciting competitive bids.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. A. Authorize a single-source procurement to Priority Dispatch for quality assurance review of emergency medical dispatch calls.
B. Approve an agreement with Priority Dispatch for a five-year, fixed cost service in an amount not to exceed \$129,428.
2. Do not authorize the Ames Police Department to enter into the 5-year agreement.

CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

The proposed agreement provides a guaranteed cost over the next five years for the quality assurance services. This cost matches the current cost per call reviewed. Quality assurance is a key part to providing an efficient and effective Emergency Medical Dispatching program. The quality assurance service from Priority Dispatch is the only service available that matches the City's EMD service and standards.

Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council adopt Alternative No. 1 A and B.