Allenstown Police Department

Memo

To: Board of Selectmen

Chief Paul Paquette

From: Lt. Michael Stark

Date: September 27, 2018

Re: PD Phone System

A purchase order will shortly be submitted to replace the phones at the PD and I wanted to present some information as to why this is being requested so the Board would be as informed as possible when evaluating the request.

The phone system at the Police Department is 20-year-old technology and we are starting to experience issues that affect our ability to interact with the public and respond to the Town’s needs. In addition, because of the age of the phones, we are limited in our ability to fix these issues and the system is limited as to how it can take advantage of all that the Internet Protocol (IP) technology provides modern phone systems.

Issues included the following; dropped calls, callers cannot hear us, phones shut down and start blinking all the lights, caller ID can only be found on one phone, voicemail is only available from the extension it is left on, speakerphone function is almost unintelligible, direct dial is unavailable, extension names are not changeable (I am currently listed as “Capt. Mulholland”), and repairs are not available for these issues because of the age of the system.

The suggested new system would tie the PD system into the system that is currently at Town Hall, the Fire Department, and the schools. This feature is part of the IP technology and would allow our name to show up when we call the school (It currently shows up at “unknown” and has gone unanswered when we were trying to call the school to put them in lock down). It would provide for direct lines to individual desks throughout the Town. This would allow for “panic buttons” to be put on the phones throughout the Town that could call the PD directly and provide a recorded message. This would bypass the alarm company and provide for a significantly faster response from the PD. It would also allow callers to the PD after hours to be directed to dispatch only for emergencies, which will help keep our dispatch costs down. A caller to the PD would be able to call the office number and could be forwarded to a patrol cell phone in order to speak directly to an officer should they want to. Voicemails can be forwarded to emails so that they are more easily retrieved and archived. The screens are easily programmable which would allow each extension to know who is calling them and who they have a message from.

Updating the system will also allow us to build in redundancies and backups that were otherwise not possible. The entire system will be backed up on the cloud and protected from emergency or disaster. We would also be able to install a microwave antenna at a later date that would protect the Town phone system from going down should the internet be interrupted. These protections are currently unavailable with the system we have.

Our current phone company, TSE will be preparing this quote and it will come in slightly over (Less than $50) the $3,000.00 limit that would require multiple bids. I would ask that we allow to go with a sole source because TSE knows our system and is most qualified to update it to fit our needs. In addition, and most importantly, we are not stuck with TSE in the future. As soon as they walk away from the building, we could switch this whole system to another company. So there is no future fiscal responsibility that the Town would face by going with TSE.

There are number of pieces of hardware needed to tie us into the IP system, and then there are two sizes of phones, Admin and small. The Admin phone has a larger screen and has more buttons that can be customized and the small one is for your less used extensions.

The project would require:

1 Data switch $350

1 PBX $695

9 Admin phones $150 each, $1350 total

5 Small phones $125 each, $625 total

Total cost: $3020.00

If there are any questions or concerns, please contact me.