



MEMORANDUM

Office of the Chief

DATE: April 12, 2011

TO: John McDonough
City Manager

FROM: Terry Sult
Chief of Police

RE: Public Safety Radio Infrastructure Update

A year and a half ago the police chiefs and fire chiefs from the N. Fulton County cities formed a working group charged with the responsibility of determining options to improve continuity and quality of service related to our first responders. The need for such a working group became critical as system radio disruptions became more common thereby threatening first responders' ability to provide services to our respective communities and their ability to protect each other. The problem has increased to a serious safety issue for all first responders operating on the Fulton County radio infrastructure.

Much has been learned over the past eighteen months but little progress has been made toward actual radio improvements. The system is past end-of-life and parts required for repairs are scarce. The attached presentation provides an overview of the situation and an update on the working group's progress.

Police



Public Safety Radio System Update

Terry Sult
Chief of Police

Public Safety Radio System Overview

- The current system is 19 years old.
- 90 percent of the system is running on original equipment with few upgrades.
- Parts are scarce and system maintenance requires daily technical support.
- Surrounding Jurisdictions (Cobb, Gwinnett, DeKalb and Atlanta) have upgraded to Digital.
- There is no viable back-up system.
- This is a **HUGE** safety issue for our first responders.



Public Safety Radio System Overview (Cont'd.)

- There are approximately 6,000 users on the system.
 - 4,000 Public Safety; 2,000 non-public safety
 - 2,000 N. Fulton Cities public safety users
- Current users pay a subscription fee of 172.58/year/radio.
 - 2010 Fulton County revenues \$315,131
- Current Fulton County radio infrastructure maintenance costs \$759,243.



N. Fulton Cities Time Line

- Q3 2009: N. Fulton Cities began discussions.
 - Exploring options
 - Fulton County, UASI, (Motorola, Harris, etc.)
 - UASI radio coverage testing
- Feb 2010: A “Letter of Interest” was sent to UASI.
 - Discussions began
 - Governance issues (Who can make a decision?)
- May 2010: A formal request was sent to UASI to use them as a back-up system.
 - Developed “Talkgroup” design with Technical Advisory Committee



N. Fulton Cities Time Line (Cont'd.)

- May - Aug 2010: Alternative options are estimated.
 - Motorola
 - Option 1: Add 3 Simulcast Sites to UASI Regional System (\$5.4M)
 - Option 2: Add 6 Simulcast Sites to Cobb Co. Master Site (\$6M-10.2M)
 - Harris
 - 7 Sites, 5-channels, P25 800 MHz Harris Simulcast System plus Master Switch: (\$3.9M)
 - UNKNOWNNS associated with this estimate
- June 2010: Fulton County presents recommendation to the Fulton County Board of Commissioners.
 - Recommending the UASI / “Option 4”



N. Fulton Cities Time Line (Cont'd.)

- Oct – Dec 2010: UASI delays....
 - No Progress
 - Often non-responsive to N. Fulton Workgroup
- Jan 2011: Fulton County proposes N. Fulton cities sub-contract with Fulton for UASI services.



Fulton Upgrades UASI Regional System Proposed Design (Cont'd.)

■ Advantages:

- Cost sharing potential based on MOU
- Lower asset ownership
- Countywide integrity during system failure
- Equal channel availability throughout coverage area
- Potential coverage in Cobb and Douglasville with MOU, and future Area 7 coverage
- Enhances grant eligibility, meets Federal multi-jurisdictional interoperability objectives



Fulton County (Phase II) Infrastructure

- UASI System Design was recommended in Dec 2010. (Known as Option #4)
 - Technical Solution/Design for enhanced coverage:
 - Add 3 sites in North Fulton
 - Add 3 sites in South Fulton
 - Fulton adds total of 6 sites to UASI system providing light in-building coverage and seamless roaming in Fulton, Atlanta, DeKalb, north Fayette and Clayton
 - Add 2 channel expansion to all sites
- Disadvantages:
 - Expanded channels (2) will need to be added to all UASI sites
 - User fees after year 2 – \$350 est. per radio annually
- Estimated Cost: \$10.3M



Fulton County (Phase II) Infrastructure

- Countywide Infrastructure User Group began in Jan 2011.
 - Coverage testing – Feb. 2011
 - Finalize coverage requirements – March, 2011
- Final technical design and MOU began in Q2 2011.
- Transition public safety users to Digital System will start in Q3 2011.



Points to Consider

■ Radio Service Fee

- Fulton County capitalizes on the \$10.3M project.
- \$350/year/radio does not include “infrastructure upgrades/refresh.”
 - Based upon 4,000 users
- Total combined N. Fulton cities annual radio services fees approx. \$800K - \$1M.
- Burdens users with maintenance for entire multi-county system.



Points to Consider (Cont'd.)

■ Governance

- UASI falls under the ARC; N. Fulton has representation.
- No direct public safety influence with UASI.
- No direct public safety representation on the UASI Policy board.

■ Contract/Sub-Contract

- How can Fulton County sub-contract for services over which they do not have decision making authority?

■ System Evolution/Cost Controls



Update from Fulton County as of 4/12/2011

- Fulton County & UASI are currently negotiating the following without the N. Fulton cities' involvement.
- There will be a transition to UASI for cities with adequate coverage as early as July 2011 .
- Fulton maintains an analog system only for next 3 years.
- The \$350/year/radio maintenance fee does not include infrastructure upgrade costs but does include contingency funding.



Update from Fulton County as of 4/12/2011 (Cont'd.)

- A “Connection Fee” will likely be charged by Fulton County to offset capitalization.
- Fulton County is negotiating to push back maintenance fees for 5 years only for Fulton County radios.
- N. Fulton cities will likely begin paying maintenance and connection fees immediately upon transition (estimated \$500+/year/radio or \$1M+ annually for N. Fulton cities).



Questions?

