

CITY OF APPLETON

FIRE DEPARTMENT



700 N. Drew Street
Appleton, WI 54911



(920) 832-5810



(920) 832-5830



jeremy.hansen@appleton.org

MEMORANDUM

September 22, 2022

To: Finance Committee, Safety & Licensing Committee and Common Council
From: Jeremy Hansen, Fire Chief
Cc: Ryan Weyers, Deputy Fire Chief
Re: Request to Accept FEMA's Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) for a Regional Radio Project

The Appleton Fire Department (AFD) is requesting approval to accept a 2021 Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) in the amount of \$1,807,911.80.

Since 2001, AFG has helped firefighters and other first responders obtain critically needed resources necessary for protecting the public and emergency personnel from fire and related hazards. The AFG supports training emergency personnel, enhancing efficiencies, and supporting community resilience. This grant opportunity places a high priority on equipment interoperability between neighboring departments. The portable radios currently utilized in the region will no longer be manufactured. This includes all associated equipment of that portable radio such as collar microphones, batteries, and parts.

AFD is the host agency in the regional effort to replace portable radios. The following Fire/EMS departments are included in the grant: Little Chute, Town of Vandenbroek/Kaukauna, City of Kaukauna, Freedom, Kimberly, Ellington, Seymour City, Rural, and Rescue, Buchanan, Dale, Bear Creek, Combined Locks, Greenville, Appleton Airport, Hortonville/Hortonia, and Grand Chute.

A total grant request of \$4,315,312.30 was submitted to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). FEMA reduced the award to approximately 42% of the original ask, or \$1,807,911.80. We are in the process of assessing the impact the reduction will have on all agencies. Based on the radio project estimated for the AFD of \$532,643.15, the City of Appleton could expect to incur a capital expense of approximately \$315,000.00 in fiscal year 2023.

Local matching funds are determined by population. The City of Appleton's local match is 10%, while the remaining participating fire department will have a 5% match. Due to the reduction in the original grant request, all agencies will exceed the local match requirements of the grant.

Unfortunately, batteries, collar microphones, and associated portable equipment will no longer be made by Motorola for Factory Mutual (FM) certified portable radios leaving us with our only affordable choice, to purchase non-intrinsically safe portable radio components. The purchase of non-intrinsically safe portable radios and components puts responders at risk in flammable/combustible environments. The Appleton Fire Department initiated working with

Outagamie County to approach this problem regionally, as many of the responding agencies in Outagamie County currently have FM certified portable radios and need to change over to Underwriter's Laboratory (UL) certified portable radios. The physical impact of such a change puts the regional responders at risk of being stuck with improper, unsafe equipment that is used for communication in hazardous and deadly environments. The primary benefit of this project is the regional community will receive updated portable radios that maintain operability throughout the county and region. Having an assigned radio dedicated to a particular riding position not only is a cost-effective way to immediately enhance operational safety, but it is also recommended by several industry standards as laid out by OSHA, NIOSH, NFPA, IAFA, and IAFF.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at (920) 832-5810. Thank you for your consideration.

