

**MONDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2021**  
**CITY COUNCIL, 6:00 PM**  
**JOINT WORK SESSION WITH COLUMBIA 9-1-1 COMMUNICATIONS DISTRICT**  
**TO DISCUSS RADIO SYSTEM**

Mayor Burge called the work session to order at 6:00 p.m.

**Present:** Mayor Scott Burge; Council President Megan Greisen; Councilor Josh Poling; Councilor Brandon Lesowske; Councilor Pete McHugh; Councilor Tyler Miller; City Manager Alexandra Rains; City Recorder Susan Reeves; Interim Police Chief Shaun Davis; Assistant to the City Manager Isaac Butman; Assistant to Public Works Director Huell Whitehaus; and Legal Counsel Peter Watts.

**Also present:** Columbia 9-1-1 Communications Executive Director Mike Fletcher; Scappoose Fire Chief Pricher and Columbia River Fire and Rescue Chief Medina.

**Remote:** Brent Lenzi; Rob Anderson; Anna Del Savio (Columbia County Spotlight); Jeff; Christine Turner; Michael Toris; CE; and one unknown caller.

**Excused:** Councilor Joel Haugen.

City Manager Rains explained tonight we have Mike Fletcher, the Executive Director of the 911 District to speak to you all about the new radio system. She explained included in the printout in front of you is an email that Interim Police Chief Davis sent to Mike Fletcher last week with some of the questions we were hoping would be addressed this evening.

Interim Police Chief Davis thanked Mr. Fletcher for being here to speak to the Mayor and Council about discussions they have had at the previous Council meeting.

Below is the list of questions sent from Interim Police Chief Davis to Columbia 9-1-1 Communications Executive Director Mike Fletcher.

1. The Request for Information (RFI) that C911 put out is now over three years old. With how fast technology changes, is there a concern there could be newer technology that might be available or are the 4 options (VHF, UHF, 700 or 800) presented still the best available options for Columbia County?
2. In Federal Engineering's report, it appears they were given 4 options (VHF, UHF, 700, and 800) from 3 vendors (Codan, Motorola and Tait) to look at and review as their scope of work. Was Federal Engineering able to independently verify or determine which of these systems was the best option for Columbia County? If not is there any discussion about having another engineering firm determine what would be best suited for Columbia County before C911 goes out for a bond?
3. As we have discussed, based upon the Federal Engineering report, there are coverage concerns. Even though my officers primarily work within the city limits, we respond to

cover other agencies outside of Scappoose, to include Scappoose Vernonia Highway, out Dutch Canyon, etc. Looking at the maps, these areas are lacking coverage for both mobile and portable radios in Federal Engineering's Report. As you know, officer safety is of the utmost priority and if coverage is lacking, they might not be able to receive important or critical updates and also not be able to broadcast important critical updates. Did Federal Engineering determine the best radio/tower site locations to give the best coverage? If not, at what point in the process does this take place? And, will C911 require that whatever system is chosen, the radio system will meet the 95% / 3.4 DAQ portable radio to repeater coverage from the hip standard?

4. Looking at the report, there is also portable radio concerns for inside buildings. When we go to a new system, how will we get reliable coverage inside pre-existing buildings? I understand the fire code affects new construction.
5. Codan, Motorola and Tait put in their RFI responses they can provide a variety of different options to include P25 digital VHF. Did Federal Engineering do mapping for this system?
6. CAD currently has the ability to AVL map MDC's. Will AVL mapping of both portable and mobile radios be able to be supported with our current CAD mapping program?
7. In the Federal Engineering Report, I didn't see any budget for Scappoose Police Department radios. We've discussed this and you shared with me that Chief Miller had provided the number of radios we need. It appears this was overlooked in the report. Will these be added?
8. I've heard there is a recommended life cycle for portable and mobile radios (7-10 years). Will C911 be budgeting to replace radios or will this be the responsibility of each user?
9. If C911 were to go with the CRESA or the WCCCA system, it looks like there are 10 years of system access fees per radio budgeted in the Federal Engineering report. Has there been discussion or what is C911's future plan at 10 years and beyond? It could be very likely we will be on the next system for 15, 20, or more years.
10. Lack of control or decision making is a concern if we choose to partner with another agency's system. They could change a site, go to new technology, etc. Does C911 share these same concerns and, if so, have they been discussed with CRESA or WCCCA?

Mike Fletcher stated to Council thank you for inviting him here, he appreciates that. He stated as City Manager Rains and Interim Police Chief Davis mentioned he did receive the email with the series of questions, and he will start off with those.

Council President Greisen mentioned that she had the opportunity to meet with Mike Fletcher, Board President Shawn Clark, City Manager Rains and Interim Police Chief Davis and she found that the information that Mike had shared was very informational with a timeline of where they have been and where they are going. She stated so at any point if Mike feels like he wants to start with that or interject with that in addition to the questions, feel free to give a general big picture, which would be really helpful.

Mike Fletcher gave an overview of Columbia 9-1-1. He explained Columbia 911 inherited the radio system. He explained the current radio system they have today is 20 plus years old and has served the purpose it was designed for. He stated certainly the community has changed in 20 plus years. There are people living where they used to be, there is commercial enterprises that were there, and construction standards have completely changed in 20 years. He explained in 2015, the 911 District hired an engineering firm to do a survey and evaluation of the current radio system and that turned up lots of information. Since 2015 the District has been incrementally making system changes and improvements and that continues today. He stated in late 2017 the District decided to publish an RFI to start the process of replacing the existing radios. He stated they have started updating their microwave system. He stated their radio system is really a system of systems; you have a radio but there are actually other components of this system that most people aren't aware of and that is a microwave system, subsystem and they started upgrading that in 2019 and are continuing to do that today. He explained those are not inexpensive upgrades, those are about \$250,000 to \$300,000. He explained in 2018 they conducted public meetings and meetings with their user groups. In 2019 they conducted further interviews with every single stakeholder of the current radio system and that was really an educational process for him as he was brand new to the 911 District. He explained this past year they contracted with an independent contracting firm offering different solutions and there are pros and cons to every one of the options. He explained they hired an independent firm to do several things; educate themselves on what the District has, look at the history, looks at the sites and the equipment, etc. They had the firm review the RFI and validate the process. He explained they took all four potential solutions and reviewed them and the District asked them for a realistic budgetary number for any one of those solutions and that was for the 911 Board's education because the lowest bid was 2.9 million dollars and that is a lot of money. He explained the range today in the budgetary numbers, they are real still until they get this drilled down, would be somewhere between 10 million dollars and 25 million dollars for this project, it depends on what spectrum you go to and what features and functions you want in the system. He stated they wanted Federal Engineering to do all these steps and then in the end, come back and tell them their independent nonbiased recommendation of those four solutions, what is in their best interest based on their needs, their topography, their history and they did. The information was presented to the 911 Board in a meeting during September of this year and after that there have been follow up meetings with their user groups, their advisory committee and the Board. He explained any information he has received he has passed along to the 911 Board. He explained the Board wants to have a better understanding of all of this information. He explained he was asked to set up another work session with Federal Engineering to have them come back out and provide more information for their advisory committee, users and 911 Board. He explained no decisions have been made, and he doesn't think there will be any in January, but they could surprise him.

Mike Fletcher went over the questions. He stated question 1: He stated the quick answer is no to any concerns of these radio spectrums that are being provided by these vendors. The radio spectrums are the industry standard. He stated question 2: He thinks he kind of answered. The reason they hired Federal Engineering was for them to act on their behalf as an independent

nonbiased party to look at all the solutions and then to develop their own recommendation as to what will serve them best.

Councilor Lesowske asked if it is uncommon for intergovernmental agreements across State lines for these kind of agreements to exist?

Mike Fletcher replied all this runs through their legal counsel and nobody has raised a flag at all but he will make a note to ask that specific question, but he doesn't think so for this.

Legal Counsel Peter Watts replied, in the interest of full disclosure, he has provided legal services for Clark County in the past, and he also represents a jurisdiction in Washington County and so he has been part of those conversations and it is extremely unusual to partner across State lines. He explained all of our laws in Oregon for partnering with different organizations are done through ORS 190 and it is Oregon specific. He explained the laws in Washington are just different than in Oregon. He explained in his experience you just don't see governments going across State boundaries because their laws are different.

Council President Greisen talked about the 95% coverage.

Mike Fletcher replied that is their standard, that is their requirement. He stated it is a national standard, but not a national law. He stated Columbia 911 is making it a requirement with any new system that they put in. He stated 95% coverage for portable radios/at the hip.

Councilor Miller asked about the RFI, page 2 where it states this RFI is solely for information and planning purposes, it does not constitute a request proposal, an invitation for bid or promise to issue an RFP or IFP in the future. He stated this was dated in 2018. He stated after reviewing that he went back and followed the timeline and looked and read the responses received and they acknowledge that they are not proposals in the response. He explained they all say what their companies can offer, but he has heard said multiple times, these responses, these RFI's, called proposals, in fact Federal Engineering calls the RFI's responses as well proposals over 30 different times over their 180 pages. He explained the fact that these responses are three years old, and the manufactures have come out with new radios. He stated there are all these different scenarios that match up with the important things that the users said were really important to them, but there are different methods now for accomplishing those things because it is 3 years later. He just wanted to point out that the RFI said it wasn't a proposal and then we got responses that also acknowledge that they weren't proposals and we also got responses from vendors that say they offer all these things, they are not just offering, not even just suggesting the VHF system or 700. He stated they fit exactly what an RFI really is.

Mike Fletcher replied he is correct, it is an RFI. He stated in the semantics of what we are calling a proposed solution from ODAN is a VHF system, and it should be noted that is all they sell. He stated the others offer anything you want, they will sell you what they have. He stated to that point, you are correct, it is an RFI so that is why they are where they are, they haven't made any decisions. He explained the Board needs more education before making a decision.

Mike Fletcher stated question 3: He stated this is not a system design at all, it is a concept. He stated it is good to have goals and his goal would be to have 100% coverage across the entire County, but that is not going to happen. He stated even 95% in a zone is going to leave areas that have poor reception, poor transmission or no transmission or no reception.

Council President Greisen asked if that is common in other areas of the State.

Mike Fletcher replied, absolutely. He stated right now Washington County and Clackamas County are going through a 135-million-dollar radio system upgrade and he can guarantee that it is not 100% coverage across those two Counties.

Mike Fletcher stated question 4: He stated there are a handful of facilities/buildings that have the distributed antenna systems, and they are built for the current radio system and if Columbia 911 chooses to stay on VHF those buildings that have bda's in them will stay there. If they choose to go to another radio spectrum those five or six buildings will have to retrofit those bda's. He stated they are making a commitment to those buildings that is it not their fault and they are committing to replace those bda's that are in existence. He explained as far as every building having them, they have zero authority to mandate them. He explained that actually falls under the umbrella of the Fire Marshall.

Mike Fletcher stated question 5: He replied no, it wasn't in their scope.

Mike Fletcher stated question 6: He stated that is a fact, yes, we do. He stated should the District go to a P25 digital system, that is in and of itself an availability to see avl/gps data off of radios and if they go to a Motorola system their CAD system already has that interface built and it would save the tax payers a lot of money because they don't have to build that or buy that.

Mike Fletcher stated question 7: He explained Columbia 911 does not own radios for Fire Departments, Police Departments or EMS services. He explained they had three different surveys over the last few years of the inventory of the various agency's radios. He stated when they gave that information to Federal Engineering for a budgetary number, the numbers were off. He explained his instructions to Federal Engineering was to aim high. He stated if they are changing bandwidth the District is buying new radios for agencies so they want to know exactly what they need with spares included.

Mike Fletcher stated question 8: He explained this hasn't been determined, they don't have a hard answer because they need to know what system they are going to.

Mike Fletcher stated question 9: He explained the ten year is just for a budgetary issue.

Mike Fletcher stated question 10: He stated this is a real issue, so the answer is yes and no. He stated a lack of control is real and they understand this.

Mayor Burge explained the work session will be continued in the City Council meeting.

## Adjournment

Mayor Burge adjourned the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

  
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Mayor Scott Burge

Attest:

  
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City Recorder Susan M. Reeves, MMC