

**RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
MARION COUNTY, KS**

February 9, 2017

Commission met in special session at the Marion Community Center Ballroom at 6:00 p.m. with Chr. Randy Dallke and Comm. Lori L. Lalouette present. Comm. Dianne R. Novak joined at 6:55 p.m. Also present were Co. Clerk Tina Spencer, Sheriff Robert Craft, Emergency Management Director Randy Frank, members of the press, and about 40 individuals representing different agencies including Marion County, various cities, townships, law enforcement agencies, fire departments and fire districts.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the upcoming transition to 800 MHz radios, and to answer questions about the process including a possible time line and sources for funding.

Chr. Dallke opened the meeting by welcoming everyone in attendance. Sheriff Craft led the meeting, explaining that the current infrastructure and radios in place were purchased in 1996 with Homeland Security funds. Parts are no longer being manufactured, and a change to more current equipment is necessary. Each entity will need to make plans to replace their radios within this or the next budget year, if possible. Sheriff Craft reassured those in attendance that the current system will be maintained until everyone can be transitioned. This will require running both systems for a period of time. Craft suggested that law enforcement might transition in 2017 and fire departments in 2018.

Possible funding sources were discussed, including grants from USDA Rural Development, Department of Justice and National Association of Fire Fighters. City Administrator Roger Holter had gathered information from several sources. Each entity would need to apply for grant funding separately. Lease purchases or low interest loans may also be an option for some agencies.

Concerns were expressed about the ability of all agencies to communicate during the transition. If some agencies are on the old system and others on the new system they may not be able to communicate effectively unless they maintain both sets of equipment. If law enforcement moves to the new system this year, but fire departments do not change equipment until next year there could be some difficulties communicating if a large public safety event were to occur.

Sheriff Craft said he has received pricing and has tested several models, and believes that the Relm products are the best value for his department. He will be recommending them as the vendor for the County's purchase. The approximate cost for a portable radio is \$1,400.00 and the approximate cost for a mobile radio is \$2,200.00. Each entity is free to choose and purchase their own equipment, but a better price will likely be offered if one vendor is providing radios for multiple agencies within the County.

Holter recommended a date be set for discontinuation of the old system. Craft hesitated to set a date because he wants to ensure all agencies are successful with obtaining the necessary funding and getting their equipment before the old system is discontinued.

Concerns were also expressed about dead spots, and Ben Steketee of Hillsboro asked whether a radio expert should provide an official assessment. R. Frank noted that it would be possible to bring the vendors in to perform such an assessment if needed, but that each type of equipment has been thoroughly tested by County and other emergency personnel.

Larry Paine asked how a disaster situation could be handled if agencies are split between systems, particularly in the first few hours. Each agency will need to plan for those situations to determine how they will accommodate a response. The County's emergency response trailer will be able to communicate with both systems, but will take some time to mobilize.

Dallke said a survey will be developed and sent to each agency in the near future to determine their level of need and whether they will be able to fund the purchase of radios, and in what time frame.

The turnaround time for repairs on the Relm products was discussed, and is believed to be quick. Holter said that he has a specification sheet for the Relm equipment and offered to provide it to the County Clerk for dissemination to all who are interested.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 7:25 p.m.

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Randy Dallke, Chairman

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
Tina D. Spencer, County Clerk