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Radio Compliance Project Moves Forward

With a Federal Communications Commission deadline of January 1, 2013 for narrow-banding of radio communications, Ellis County Commissioners awarded the bid for “Design and Modification for Repairs of VHF Radio System” to BearCom Wireless Worldwide. The action was taken during the Court’s regularly-scheduled meeting on Monday, February 27, 2012.

“Everyone (on the radio committee) individually rated the proposals, based on the criteria,” said Special Projects Director Kathy Eriksen. “It was a unanimous consensus that BearCom be awarded the contract.”

BearCom received 87.5 out of a possible 100 points from the committee, while the next highest score was 20 points.

“This is the culmination of an item approved on November 28, 2011 under minute order 396.11,” Eriksen explained.

A request by County and District Attorney Patrick Wilson for service contract changes aimed at enhancing data processing services was also approved by the Court.

“This was originally sought by Mr. Wilson and brought to the attention of the Court during the budget cycle,” said Assistant County and District Attorney Lee Auvenshine. “This will enhance our capabilities, speed up our work, and make it more efficient.”

The original contract with Local Government Solutions was approved in 2002, and the addendum does not extend the term of that contract, although it does guarantee a discount for a period of five years should the Court later extend the contract.

At the request of County Auditor Mike Navarro, the Court adopted a Fund Balance Policy as required by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board Statement 54.

“Currently, I report the fund balance in two categories – restricted and unrestricted,” he said. “Because we are a government entity, we are subject to this standard, which now requires five different designations.”

The requirement is to report the funds as Non-Spendable, Restricted, Committed, Assigned, and Unassigned.

“This won’t have any effect on the day to day operations of our business, or on the services that people receive,” Navarro added. “This is done for financial presentation purposes.”

Navarro has served as the County Auditor since 1999, and as First Assistant Auditor prior to that time. Under his guidance, the office has won the Government Finance Officers Association Award for Excellence in Financial Reporting for 15 consecutive years, as well as the Texas Comptroller’s Gold Leadership Circle Award for openness in government finance. Additionally, the County’s bond rating was upgraded from A to AA within the last few years.

No action was taken on a proposal to enact a ban on outdoor burning.