Clarington

Staff Report

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Report To:	**General Government Committee**
Date of Meeting: November 29, 2021	**Report Number:** FSD-052-21
Submitted By:	Trevor Pinn, Director of Financial Services/Treasurer
Reviewed By: Andrew C. Allison, CAO	**Resolution#:**
File Number: [If applicable, enter File Number]	**By-law Number:**
Report Subject:	Sole Source award to Tablet Command for the supply, delivery and installation of mobile data terminals.

Recommendations:

1. That Report FSD-052-21 and any related communication items, be received;

2. That authority be granted to the Purchasing Manager to negotiate and enter into a sole source agreement with Tablet Command for the supply, delivery, and installation of mobile data terminals (MDT) for a total amount not to exceed the upset limit of $35,000 excluding tax and on terms and conditions satisfactory to the Director of Emergency and Fire Services/Fire Chief and in a form satisfactory to the Municipal Solicitor;

3. That the estimated funding of $35,000 which includes the cost of the MDT and other costs such as iPads and computer accessories be drawn from the Community Emergency Management Reserve Fund; and

4. That all interested parties listed in Report FSD-052-21 and any delegations be advised of Council's decision.

Report Overview

The purpose of this report is to request authority to enter into a sole source agreement with Tablet Command for the supply, delivery of and installation of mobile data terminals including other computer related accessories.

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1. Background

1.1 The current process used by the Municipality of Clarington's Emergency and Fire Services Department from the receipt of an emergency acknowledge is predicated on a paper-based system. Upon receipt of the dispatch information, the operator reviews the location and plots a route of travel from paper maps.

1.2 To minimize the response time to an emergency, all fire departments along the Lakeshore utilize a mobile data terminal (MDT) in their apparatus. MDTs are also common in many urban fire services in Ontario. An MDT system allows for information to be exchanged electronically though a mobile device coupled with turn-by-turn directions though google maps and reduces unnecessary steps from the moment an alarm is raised and during the travel time, ultimately reducing the total intervention time of an emergency.

1.3 The MDT acts as a link between communications, the computer-aided dispatch (CAD) provider and the fire apparatus. There is some interaction between all parties allowing for information to be updated in a "live" environment. Additionally, the MDT allows for information to be transmitted between all parties without having to verbalize over the radio. Each fire truck is equipped with a portable computer and a wireless modem connected to it; this will allow the portable computer to connect to the network through the wireless modem via a cellular network.

2. Analysis

2.1 Whitby Fire and Emergency Services implemented the use of an MDT through a competitive bidding process. A contract was issued to Tablet Command to provide a mobile data terminal system. Tablet Command is currently in place with 2 fire services in the Durham Region along with others in York Region.

2.2 Other Durham Regional fire services have expressed interest in moving towards Tablet Command as their service provider in the future.

2.3 Research has shown that there are currently 2 variations of MDTs in service: Panasonic Toughbook and Apple iPad. Panasonic Toughbook's are a rugged laptop that mount in front of the officer or on the engine cover, but they are larger in size and consume a

sizable amount of interior space. Apple iPads, also mounted in similar locations, are smaller and more agile as they can be removed and used for other purposes. Connectivity to both devices is through a cellular modem mounted in the apparatus. As Tablet Command is operated on an iPad, the incident commander can move command post or communicate with fireground sectors through video communication (FaceTime). The intention is to implement the MDTs in 6 of the fire trucks. Additional fire tucks will be fitted with the MDTs as the rural areas are able to maintain a stable and consistent cellular service. The use of iPads in today's environment is pervasive as fire staff are accustomed to the intuitive nature with iPads allowing for increased confidence due to familiarity with the hardware thus reducing the need for extended training.

2.4   It should be noted that the Municipality's Director of Emergency and Fire Services/Fire Chief was involved in the implementation and roll out of the MDT at the Town of Whitby and brings a wealth of knowledge and skill in this regard.

3.   Financial

3.1   The cost associated with this purchase and other related costs such as iPads and installation is estimated at $35,000, excluding tax, and the required funding will be funded from the Community Emergency Management Reserve Fund. The MDTs can be utilized in fire, hazardous materials, evacuations, and other community emergencies that the Service responds to. The funds required for subsequent years will be included in future budget accounts.

4.   Comments

This report recommends the purchase of an MDT from the service provider, Tablet Command. This application has been used in Durham Region for several years with great success, and provides the following benefits:

- Application is proven successful in a fire environment;
- Application Program Interface has been created with the Municipality's current CAD provider and can be implemented without additional costs or software development;
- Subject matter experts are on Clarington staff;
- Training manuals have been created, written by the current Fire Chief;
- Positive return on investment: iPad are significantly cheaper than Toughbook laptops ($1000 vs $2000);
- Technology allows for mobility;
- Technology is intuitive, easily used;
- Incident command application;

- IT related support from neighbouring municipalities, if required;
- Common language for communications staff and neighbouring fire services which is beneficial in a large-scale mutual aid incident.

5. Concurrence

This report has been reviewed by the Director of Emergency and Fire Services and Fire Chief who concurs with the recommendations.

6. Conclusion

It is respectfully recommended that a sole source contract be awarded to Tablet Command for the supply, delivery, and implementation of mobile data terminals for Emergency and Fire Services.

Staff Contact: David Ferguson, Purchasing Manager, 905-623-3379 ext. 2209 or dferguson@clarington.net.

Attachments:

Not Applicable

Interested Parties:

There are no interested parties to be notified of Council's decision.