



# MEMORANDUM

---

**Ordinance 23-55, An Ordinance of the City Council of Homer, Alaska Accepting and Appropriating an FY 2023 State Homeland Security Program Grant in the Amount of \$88,196.56 from the Alaska Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Management (DHS&EM) to Upgrade Homer Volunteer Fire Department Portable Radios and Provide a Backup Repeater for the City's Public Safety Communications System, Authorizing a Sole Source Request to Contract with PROCOMM Alaska and Authorizing the City Manager to Negotiate and Execute the Appropriate Documents. City Manager.**

**Item Type:** Backup Memorandum  
**Prepared For:** Mayor and City Council  
**Date:** October 20, 2023  
**From:** Chief Robl  
**Through:** Rob Dumouchel

---

I am pleased to report that the City has been awarded a FY2023 Homeland Security grant in the amount of \$88,196.56 for upgrading public safety communications within the City.

The grant will accomplish two important upgrades. It funds the purchase and installation of a backup repeater for Homer's public safety radio system. When one repeater goes down we, we lose that radio resource as it is sent back to the factory for repair. The best case scenario is a 6 to 8-week outage, if they have the parts in stock. With the on-going supply chain troubles, though, it is likely it will be down for several months. This can have serious consequences during a major incident response.

The grant also provides funds to purchase twelve Homer Volunteer Fire Department portable radios with Bluetooth technology that can integrate with the Department's new Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA). In 2020, the City replaced HVFD's non-NFPA-compliant SCBA. The new models allow responders' radios to connect via noise-cancelling Bluetooth technology in the SCBA headpieces for hands free communications. Noise cancelling greatly improves communications by reducing the ambient noise typical radio microphones pick up during voice transmissions in loud environments. Hands-free communication is extremely beneficial during rescue operations when hands are needed for other tasks and could possibly save a firefighter's life if they become injured or trapped in a fire and cannot use their hands.

Staff also requests to complete this project with a sole source contract to ProComm Alaska for the following reasons:

ProComm Alaska (PCA) has been servicing our radio system for 30 years. Their service has been superb and delivered in an extremely professional manner. They are intimately familiar with our system and the unique radio frequency anomalies in our area.

PCA is the only firm in the State of Alaska that is a certified APCO P25 Systems Specialist and authorized to function as a full service manufacturer's representative for Motorola. Their public safety communications technicians are certified with Motorola factory training.

**Recommendation:** Accept and appropriate the FY 2023 State Homeland Security Grant in the amount of \$88,196.56 and approve a sole source purchase request to ProComm Alaska for the associated equipment.