

City of Scottsbluff, Nebraska

Monday, December 7, 2015

Regular Meeting

Item Reports2

Council to receive a report on the Emergency Management Outdoor Warning System Status and Recommendations and consider approval of a grant match for purchase of the sirens.

Staff Contact: Rick Kuckkahn, City Manager

Outdoor Warning System Status and Recommendations



Outdoor Warning System

Status and Recommendations

- The City of Scottsbluff has four outdoor warning sirens in need of replacement all are 1955 Federal Signal Thunderbolts. These were discontinued in the early 1990s parts are no longer available.
- They are located at Westmoor (W 16th Street and Avenue O), E 27th Street and Hwy 26 behind the Information Caboose, City Shops at Railway and 3rd Avenue, and Overland Park at E 12th Street and 12th Avenue.
 - The siren at E 27th and Hwy 26 has failed to function in the past, but no problems were found by maintenance.
 - The siren at the City Shops failed to function and has been repaired more than once.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

- The siren at Northwood Park, a Whelen WPS-2910, is the most modern and has the option of a voice message to be broadcast after siren activation. This siren, installed, cost \$29,150 in August 2011. A quote has not yet been requested. This would be my recommendation.
- The siren at the Soccer Complex, a Federal Siren 2001-130 would be my second choice but it does not have voice messaging and is not Omni-directional. In 2011 a quote for this model was \$19,712 installed.
- If Hazard Mitigation funds are approved, the city would need to pay for 25% of the project which would be \$30,000 depending on the siren selected.



Information on Possible Grant Funding

Hazard Mitigation Grant DR-4225

On June 25th, 2015, the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) announced the availability of grant funds through the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP). This was in direct relationship to the flooding in parts of Southeast Nebraska in May of this year. Hazard Mitigation funds are related to disasters because their funding is 15% of the total funding estimate for the disaster itself. Of that amount, 10% is set aside for projects that are difficult to quantify with a cost/benefit analysis. Prime examples of this type of project are warning sirens and backup generators. Examples of projects that would fall outside of the 10% "small-project" set-out would be floodwall construction, flood-prone property acquisition, safe-room construction, etc.

As Emergency Manager for Region 22, I sent in Notices of Intent (NOI) to apply to replace nine sirens in the Region. One in Harrisburg, Banner County, one in Henry, one in McGrew, two in Morrill and four in Scottsbluff. These are the sirens that are the oldest and/or have the most malfunctions (or some not working at all). These NOI are "pre-application applications". Meaning they simply allow NEMA to find out how many applications they can expect and how much money is being requested. The Governor's Disaster Task Force then sorts these projects into a priority list and approves those jurisdictions to apply for funding. I received notification that the Villages of Harrisburg, Henry and McGrew were approved to apply. Morrill was approved to apply for one of their two sirens. Scottsbluff was not approved for funding at this time, but they requested we turn in the application anyway. This is because other jurisdictions may decide to pass up their opportunity or the total amount of funding to the state may be more than expected. This could make funds available for Scottsbluff's siren project. Having the application on file would speed up the process.

HMGP funding is a 75/25 split, meaning that FEMA pays for 75% of the project amount, and the local jurisdiction is obligated for 25%. However the 25% can be a "soft match" and use in-kind donations, installation work done by the city, etc. Federal funds cannot be used for the local 25% with one exception. Funding provided to states under the Community Development Block Grant program from the Department of Housing and Urban Development can be used to meet the non-federal share requirement. If the project costs more than the requested amount, FEMA will cover any overruns in most situations, as long as the overrun is justified and NEMA is notified in advance.