



COUNTY OF SAN MATEO
SHERIFF'S OFFICE
Inter-Departmental Correspondence

DATE: October 19, 2004

BOARD MEETING DATE: November 2, 2004

TO: Honorable Board of Supervisors
FROM: Sheriff Don Horsley *Don Horsley 10/19/04*
SUBJECT: Inmate Telephone System – Contract Extension

Recommendation

Adopt a Resolution authorizing the Sheriff to execute the First Amendment to the Agreement with Evercom Systems, Inc., to continue providing Inmate Telephone Services in San Mateo County Correctional Facilities through October 30, 2007.

Background

On October 30, 2001, your Board authorized the execution of an agreement with Evercom Systems, Inc. to provide Inmate telephone service in all correctional facilities under Sheriff's control. Evercom was selected through an extensive RFP process that involved representatives from three San Mateo County departments, as well as from three other counties.

Service has improved considerably during the term of the County's agreement with Evercom. All telephones in the jails have been replaced with modern heavy-duty phones that were specifically designed for correctional facilities, the amount of telephone disrepair downtime has been significantly reduced, and Evercom has provided an on-site system administrator who monitors the system and attends to all service needs and inmate complaints regarding phone service, including phone repair.

Evercom also installed a technologically advanced computerized telephone system that provides a range of options for the department as well as a range of payment plans for inmates and their families. Since costs for inmate families are a regular concern, the Sheriff has implemented pre-paid calling cards which allows inmates to purchase cards from personal funds held on account at the jail, and also a family-controlled pre-payment plan which places a monthly cap, pre-determined by the inmate family, on total calling hours and

costs. New technology will soon also allow placing calls to cell phones, which can be cheaper than land-line calls in some cases such as long-distance calls. These options are increasingly popular with inmates and their families, as an alternative to traditional collect calls.

All funds collected from inmate telephone commissions are deposited directly into the Inmate Welfare Fund, which is used to pay for a wide variety of inmate programming and services, including Service League activities, library services, GED programming, mental health, CHOICES substance abuse, and domestic violence counseling, and inmate recreational activities. In the past three years, revenue received from inmate telephones and commissary was in excess of three million dollars, and the great majority of these funds were awarded out to the non-profit providers that provide the above inmate services. The Inmate Welfare Fund is audited annually by the San Mateo County Controller's Office, and has received no significant audit exceptions over the past decade.

Discussion

The initial Agreement was for three years, and will expire on October 30, 2004. It includes an option to extend the term by mutual agreement. There was an initial contract execution payment of \$250,000 and additional \$100,000 minimum payment is to be paid for each additional year of renewal. In the last few months Sheriff's office has been negotiating with Evercom for an improved compensation, and have reached an agreement whereby Evercom will pay the county an additional \$400,000 in exchange for a three-year extension to beyond what is in the existing contract renewal provisions. We are please to bring to your Board an improved proposal, which we think is in the best interests of the Inmate Welfare Fund and the inmates, and helps ensure that the present level of inmate services and programming can be provided for the near future, without further budget reductions.

Evercom has also agreed to other service upgrades. We have advised Evercom that the County plans to issue an RFP again in early 2007 for inmate telephone services.

In addition to these payments, Evercom will continue to provide guaranteed annual commission payments of \$700,000, which might increase with the impending introduction of a new pre-paid phone card platform into Maguire facility. The new pre-paid phone cards allow inmates to make phone calls that are currently not possible with the old platform, such as cell phones and international calls.

Vision Alignment

This proposal meets Vision 2010 goal number 7 "Maintain and enhance the public safety of all residents and visitors", as well as goal number 8, by allowing our more vulnerable population to achieve a better quality of life, by staying in touch with their families and friends.

The proposed Amendment has been reviewed and approved as to form by County Counsel.

Fiscal Impact

There is no direct impact to the County's General fund as the revenues generated through this Amendment will be deposited to the Inmate Welfare Fund. However, these funds are used to finance some inmate programs and services in Correctional Mental Health which are provided by County employees, that may otherwise not be funded or have a reduced level of funding through the Sheriff's Office General Fund budget if no other source could be found. Thus, there is an indirect beneficial effect in the County's support of the Inmate Welfare Fund activities.

RECOMMENDED
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COUNTY MANAGER