

**CITY OF OAKLAND**

**AGENDA REPORT**

**2011 AUG 31 PM 12: 01**

**TO:** Office of the City Administrator  
**ATTN:** Deanna J. Santana  
**FROM:** Mark Hoffmann, Interim Fire Chief  
**DATE:** September 13, 2011

**RE:** Resolution Authorizing The City Administrator, Or Her Designee: 1) To Waive the Competitive Request For Proposals (RFP) Process, And 2) To Enter Into A Professional Services Agreement With Protocol Support LLC To Provide External Auditing of the City of Oakland's 911 Medical Dispatching Services In An Amount Not To Exceed Thirty-Six Thousand Dollars (\$36,000) For The Period October 1, 2011 Through September 30, 2012 With Two One-Year Options To Extend

---

**SUMMARY**

The City of Oakland's Emergency Medical Dispatch services have achieved the status of an Accredited Center of Excellence (ACE). Providing this advanced level of medical dispatching services in Alameda County requires continued accreditation from the National Academies of Emergency Dispatch (NAED). Maintaining an ACE accreditation in medical dispatch demands an aggressive and continuous cycle of performance audits, individualized feedback and focused training and monitoring.

Staff requests that City Council authorize the City Administrator to enter into a contract with Protocol Support LLC in an amount not to exceed \$36,000 for the period October 1, 2011 through September 30, 2012, with two one-year options to extend, to perform this audit service. This contract for services will ensure the highest quality level of audit services for the City of Oakland's Medical Dispatch services and provide critical individual feedback to guide training and mentoring of our dispatch center employees.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

The annual cost of this contracted service will not exceed thirty-six thousand dollars (\$36,000). There is no impact to the General Purpose Fund. OFD has maintained a fund balance in the Alameda County Emergency Dispatch Service – Measure M Fund 2412, for incidental and service improvements as outlined in the fund balance spending plan (*Attachment A*). This contract will be funded from the Measure M (Fund 2412) fund balance, which will be appropriated to Measure M Fund (2412), Communication Emergency Dispatch Organization (20251), Contract Account (54919), and Dispatch Communication Program (PS20).

Item: \_\_\_\_\_  
Public Safety Committee  
September 13, 2011

The current certified Quality Assurance (QA) staffing has been reduced through one retirement and two employees that left the City of Oakland for other employment. The remaining one part-time auditor (less than eight hours/week) is on reassignment from the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Training Division and would be available to return to needed Community EMS training activities. The first year cost of one entry-level qualified person is \$45,000-\$55,500 including benefits. The additional training and time necessary to prepare a new employee to audit can add another \$5,000-\$10,000 to the cost of hiring an employee to perform this work. Additionally, the QA work cannot be interrupted due to staff turnover because the auditing of medical calls is a monthly requirement to meet the NAED standards. It is much more cost-effective and efficient to contract with Protocol Support to provide this uninterrupted service and it ensures access to the expertise of the entire firm.

## **BACKGROUND**

The Oakland Fire Department Dispatch Center (FDC) provided emergency medical dispatch for approximately 53,000 emergency calls for service in 2010. The Medical Priority Dispatch System (MPDS) used in the FDC is the internationally recognized standard for providing medical instructions and dispatching services to the 911 caller. The Medical Priority Dispatch System evaluates calls and allows for the rapid dispatch of appropriate First Responders and County Transport Ambulances based on its internationally recognized standards of service to the public.

Accredited Centers must document audits for thousands of calls annually in a timely manner to demonstrate compliance with the international standards for professional dispatch. The continuous performance audit process is labor and time intensive. The quality, timeliness and value of an audit is directly related to the training and experience of the auditor. An independent, consistent, reliable and high quality solution that can reduce operational costs is available for this service requirement. Initiating this professional services agreement ensures that the review process is being conducted by certified, National Academies of Emergency Dispatch (NAED) instructor-level auditors with a minimum of five years of expertise.

## **KEY ISSUES AND IMPACTS**

Due to the small and specialized technical field involved, it has proven difficult to find consultants with the necessary knowledge and expertise to assist the EMS Division with providing quality assurance on medical dispatch calls. Staff researched potential firms and two firms were identified. Protocol Support LLC was determined to be the most qualified to provide these services. Both firms provided proposals that were similar in price and scope, but Protocol Support has a proven track record and positive standing in the field. The other provider is new to this business. Protocol Support is a Florida-based firm that has been in business since 2004.

They offer a range of services including Quality Assurance, training for Dispatchers and assistance with ACE certification.

This service contract will allow OFD to deliver the highest quality service in the most cost-effective way. Completing the required number of quality audits on time each month has been extremely difficult due to fluctuations in the number of certified audit personnel. This contract eliminates potential inconsistent coverage of this critical function with part-time employees and provides third-party oversight to insure the quality and safety of 911 services to the citizens of the East Bay. Initiating this contract for services ensures that we will be able to meet the required audits every month and in turn, assists in maintaining our Accredited Center of Excellence rating.

### PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Oakland is the only city in Alameda County with a tiered response system that evaluates calls and allows for the rapid dispatch of appropriate First Responders and County Transport Ambulances based on its internationally recognized standards of service to the public. 911 medical calls require the highest level of oversight and continuous audit and review. This contract for service will provide an unbiased, external, and consistent audit process for this critical community service.

The services to be performed by Protocol Support, LLC shall consist of those services requested by the Project Manager or a designated representative, including (but not limited to) the following:

- 1) Review (QA) the audio recordings and CAD/ProQA records.
  - a) And from these reviews:
    - i) Provide 34 Medical Dispatch Case Evaluation Records weekly.
    - ii) Assure that a minimum of 136 Medical Dispatch Case Evaluation Records are completed and documented at or above the current National Academy of Emergency Medical Dispatch standard each month of the contracted period of service.
- 2) For each call reviewed, score the E.M.D.'s compliance using the most current National Academy of Emergency Dispatch standards using the most current and compatible version of AQUA software from Priority Dispatch Inc.
- 3) Provide clear written explanations in the comment sections for any areas noted as deficient or deviating from call-taking standards.
- 4) Provide detailed information when reporting any noted agency-wide deficiencies or deviations from standards of the National Academy of Emergency Medical Dispatch.

Item: \_\_\_\_\_  
Public Safety Committee  
September 13, 2011

- 5) Protocol Support LLC will provide a representative of Protocol Support LLC's call review unit for discussion of reports provided within 48 hrs of request by Oakland's Quality Assurance Unit.
- 6) Required weekly Medical Dispatch Case Evaluation Records will be made available and placed within clearly labeled files in the Case Review Section of the AQUA Phoenix application on the City of Oakland's AQUA server.
- 7) No whole or part there of or any dispatcher results, audio files, scores, summaries of any reviews or any reports related to Protocol Support LLC's service to the City of Oakland will be released, or transmitted whole or in part without the expressed written permission of the City of Oakland's Fire Communications Division Chief.

#### **SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES**

**Economic:** This contract for services will assist with improving the quality of services provided on medical dispatch calls, which benefits all residents, visitors and businesses of the City of Oakland.

**Environmental:** There are no environmental issues associated with this report.

**Social Equity:** This contract for services will assist with improving the quality of services provided on medical dispatch calls, which benefits those who are frequent callers to 911. Frequent users tend to be residents without healthcare insurance and without access to routine medical care.

#### **DISABILITY AND SENIOR CITIZEN ACCESS**

There are no disability or senior citizen access issues associated with the report.

#### **RECOMMENDATION AND RATIONALE**

Enhanced patient care is a top priority for emergency medical services providers. The Medical Priority Dispatch System is the internationally recognized standard for providing medical instructions and dispatching services to the 911 caller. The Medical Priority Dispatch System evaluates calls and allows for the rapid dispatch of appropriate first responders and County transport ambulances based on its internationally recognized standards of service to the public. Providing this advanced level of Medical Dispatching Services in Alameda County requires

Item: \_\_\_\_\_  
Public Safety Committee  
September 13, 2011

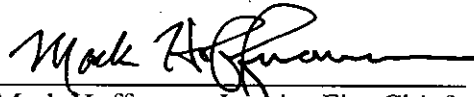
continued accreditation from the National Academies of Emergency Dispatch. Maintaining an ACE accreditation in Medical Dispatch demands an aggressive continuous cycle of performance audits, individualized feedback and focused training and monitoring.

Staff recommends that the City Council adopt the resolution for the planned use of medical dispatching review services from Protocol Support LLC for the period of October 1, 2011 to September 30, 2012 in an amount not to exceed thirty-six thousand dollars (\$36,000). This contract for services will ensure the highest level of audit services for the City of Oakland's Medical Dispatch services, will provide critical individual feedback to guide training and mentoring of our dispatch center employees, and will assist in maintaining the Fire Dispatch Center's ACE rating.

**ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

Staff recommends that the City Council adopt the resolution authorizing the City Administrator to 1) waive the competitive request for proposals (RFP) process and, 2) enter into a professional services agreement with Protocol Support LLC to provide external auditing of the City of Oakland's 911 medical dispatching services for the period October 1, 2011 through September 30, 2012 in an amount not to exceed thirty-six thousand dollars (\$36,000).

Respectfully submitted,



Mark Hoffmann, Interim Fire Chief  
Oakland Fire Department

Reviewed by:  
Anne Campbell Washington, Chief of Staff/Assistant to  
the Director

Prepared by:  
Lujs Diaz, Emergency Medical Services Coordinator  
Emergency Medical Services Division, OFD

APPROVED AND FORWARDED TO THE  
PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE:



Office of the City Administrator

Item: \_\_\_\_\_  
Public Safety Committee  
September 13, 2011

2011 AUG 31 PM 12: 01

Approved as to Form and Legality

# OAKLAND CITY COUNCIL

  
City Attorney

RESOLUTION No. \_\_\_\_\_ C.M.S.

Introduced by Councilmember \_\_\_\_\_

---

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY ADMINISTRATOR, OR HER DESIGNEE: 1) TO WAIVE THE COMPETITIVE REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP) PROCESS, AND 2) TO ENTER INTO A PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH PROTOCOL SUPPORT LLC TO PROVIDE EXTERNAL AUDITING OF THE CITY OF OAKLAND'S 911 MEDICAL DISPATCHING SERVICES IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED THIRTY-SIX THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$36,000) FOR THE PERIOD OCTOBER 1, 2011 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 30, 2012 WITH TWO ONE-YEAR OPTIONS TO EXTEND**

**WHEREAS**, the Oakland Fire Department's Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Division desires to contract with a firm to provide external auditing of the City of Oakland's 911 medical dispatching services; and

**WHEREAS**, due to the small and specialized technical field involved, it has proven difficult to find consultants with the necessary knowledge and expertise to assist the EMS Division with providing quality assurance on medical dispatch calls; and

**WHEREAS**, Protocol Support LLC has been in business since 2004 and they offer a range of services including Quality Assurance, training for Dispatchers and assistance with Accredited Center of Excellence (ACE) certification; and

**WHEREAS**, entering into a professional services agreement with Protocol Support LLC is the most efficient and cost-effective method to provide the quality assurance and medical dispatch call auditing for the Fire Dispatch Center that is required to maintain the ACE status in an uninterrupted and timely manner; and

**WHEREAS**, the Oakland Fire Department has funding available in the Measure M (Fund 2412) fund balance, which will be appropriated to Measure M Fund (2412), Communication Emergency Dispatch Organization (20251), Contract Account (54919), and Dispatch Communication Program (PS20); now, therefore be it

**RESOLVED**, That pursuant to Oakland Municipal Code 2.04.051.B and information set forth in the agenda report accompanying this item, the City Council finds and determines that it is in the City's best interests to waive the competitive request for proposal/qualifications process for external auditing of the City of Oakland's 911 emergency medical dispatching services; and be it

**FURTHER RESOLVED**, That the City Council hereby authorizes the City Administrator, or her designee, to enter into a Professional Services Agreement with Protocol Support LLC for external auditing of the City of Oakland's 911 emergency medical dispatching services in an amount not to exceed thirty-six thousand dollars (\$36,000) for the period of October 1, 2011 through September 30, 2012 with two one-year options to extend; and be it

**FURTHER RESOLVED**, That funding is available in Measure M (Fund 2412) fund balance, which will be appropriated to Measure M Fund (2412), Communication Emergency Dispatch Organization (20251), Contract Account (54919) and Dispatch Communication Program (PS20); and be it

**FURTHER RESOLVED**, That the City Attorney shall review and approve said Professional Services Agreement with Protocol Support LLC, as to form and legality and a copy of the fully executed agreement shall be placed on file with the Office of the City Clerk.

IN COUNCIL, OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA, \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_\_

**PASSED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:**

**AYES - BROOKS, BRUNNER, DE LA FUENTE, KAPLAN, KERNIGHAN, NADEL, SCHAAF and PRESIDENT REID**

**NOES -**

**ABSENT -**

**ABSTENTION -**

**ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_**

**LaTonda Simmons**  
City Clerk and Clerk of the Council  
of the City of Oakland, California