

## COUNTY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT STAFF REPORT

**TO:** The Members of the County Commission

**DATE:** February 10, 2021

**SUBJECT:** Departmental notes for the February 16, 2021 meeting.

**PREPARED BY:** Robert W. Hill, County Emergency Manager

January 21, 2021: The East Central Regional Communications Council met via GoToMeeting and the Elkton Repeater was discussed. It was determined that the repeater is needed to improve communications in eastern Brookings County. The labor fee for the 911 communications programming will be partially paid for from the Centers budget and the rest will be covered by Brookings County since it is not located in the City of Brookings.

February 2, 2021: Verified that the quote from Sioux Falls Solutions (Sioux Falls Two Way Radio) was still valid.

I recommend that the Brookings County Commission approve the request to purchase and install a repeater in Elkton, SD. The estimated cost is: \$20,608.00. With the cost share for the work for install/programming and a new radio in the 911 center the cost will be approximately \$19,274.80 Brookings County and \$1,333.20 for the 911 Center/City of Brookings.

Below is the supporting materials demonstrating the need for the new repeater.

3/04/2019

We had a leased repeater North of Brookings that originally had a height of 200 feet. It was lowered to 80 feet when the company that maintained the repeater lost their lease space.

As to today, the County has four repeaters. One in Sinai on the grain elevator installed in 2013, one Brookings, on the blue water tower on 20<sup>th</sup> Street South installed a long time ago, antenna replaced in 2017 due to FAA requirements, one in Bruce, on the grain elevator and one in White, on the water tower both installed in 2019.

All county fire departments had their radios reprogrammed to the new repeaters.

On 11/19/2020 I received the following email from an Elkton First Responder.

"We are experiencing further issues with the county radio system over in Elkton. There are continuing issues with everyone getting the radio pages and the text pages often come 5 minutes after the start of the call. This is not acceptable for our service and has now been elevated to the State EMS level.

The State EMS group has some questions that they want answers to.

## COUNTY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT STAFF REPORT

What is the exact location of the 4 repeaters, what is the height of the antennas on each site and if any have been moved at all in the past few years, how far were they moved? The state is interested in our situation at this point and wants to see what can be done to mitigate this issue.

I have copied Scott Stuefen, our ambulance director, on this correspondence.

Thank you

--

**Arend Schuurman**

**NKØV"**

I contacted Sioux Falls Two Way Solutions and they replied with the following information.

I forwarded the information to Mr. Schuurman on the same day.

"The City of Elkton does not have any repeaters in their area. The county Repeater locations are as follows:

Brookings: 20th St S Water tower	44 16' 16" N 96 47' 57.86" W
Bruce: Main Elevator	44 26' 17.34" N 96 53' 17.71" W
Sinai: Main Elevator	44 14' 38.81" N 97 02' 25.47" W
White: City Water tower	44 26' 07.77" N 96 38' 54.95" W

Hope this helps

Dave Sharkey, Sioux Falls Two Way Solutions, Inc"

I also checked with the Regional 911 Center's Communications Commander JoLynn Longville and asked if there were ongoing issues with the Elkton area receiving communications from them. She then started an email string between the Elkton First Responders, her office and my county office.

On 11/24/2020 the following email was received:

"When we had the fire call at the school on Monday morning I actually had my radio in my hand standing in my kitchen. I received no tones and no voice. The only communication I got was when Elkton Fire responded they were in route.

## COUNTY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT STAFF REPORT

But with the 18:30 pager test on Monday evening I did receive tones but the voice was garbled and unintelligible. I will check from a different location in town tonight with the 18:30 test.”

This was from a residence located in Elkton.

On 12/09/2020 I sent the following email:

“Ma’am and a bunch of Sirs,

I plan on giving a presentation to the County Commission on December 22, 2020 about the radio issues in Elkton. I have pasted the issues that I am aware as of now.

Please let me know by Monday morning if you have any additional comments, I need to prepare a staff report for the complete commission.

I really need specifics, such as where you are not receiving messages and where you are.”

As of 12/16/2020 I have not received a reply.

On December 2, 2020 I received a quote for a new repeater in case one was determined to be needed in Elkton. I contacted the city for their water tower height and sent the information to Sioux Falls Two Way Solutions for a quote. The quote also includes installing a new radio in the 911 Center since the current radio has all of the spots filled with our other repeaters and some radio programming.

Emergency Manager Comments. We do know that Elkton is 16.53 miles as the crow flies. Volunteer first responders in Elkton live throughout the area, not just in town. When a study was conducted by Motorola in 2019 it showed some sporadic coverage especially to the South of Elkton.

Elkton currently has a Community Volunteer Fire Department and Volunteer Ambulance Department.

I would recommend that we contract with Sioux Falls Two Way Solutions and make sure that the new repeater will function properly and if it does install a repeater on the water tower in Elkton if their City Council approves it also.

Two Way



Solutions, Inc.

TWOWAYSOLUTIONSINC.COM



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Company: Brookings Co	Call Sign:	Date: Dec 1 2020
Contact:	Phone #:	Sales person: Jeff Stahlecker
Address:	Email:	Cust PO #:
City:		

QTY	MODEL #	DESCRIPTION	UNIT PRICE	TOTAL
1		SLR 8000 100 watt repeater and license	\$15,793.00	\$15,793.00
1	INSTALL	INSTALL/TRIP	\$2,850.00	\$2,850.00
1		VHF XPR 5550 Mobile Radio	\$1,190.00	\$1,190.00
31		Reprogram radios any more radio than the 31 will be 25.00	\$25.00	\$775.00

TOTAL \$20,608.00



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NOTES: PRICES GOOD FOR 30 DAYS FROM DATE. TAXES AND SHIPPING WILL BE ADDED AS APPLICABLE.