



TOWNSHIP OF HILLSBOROUGH

379 South Branch Road
Hillsborough, NJ 08844
Phone (908) 369-4313
Fax (908) 369-6034

News Release

Contact: Mayor Frank DelCore
Committeeman Greg Burchette
Phone: (908) 369-3535

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Twp. Communication Systems To Be Upgraded System Replacements Necessary to Meet New Federal Requirements and To Ensure Public Safety During Emergencies

The Township Committee took action Tuesday night to upgrade communication systems both for public safety and to replace the aging municipal telephone system.

“This bond ordinance is not for routine capital expenditures, but rather material capital purchases needed to ensure public safety, that cannot be funded as part of our annual capital plan,” stated Mayor Frank DelCore during his comments for the ordinance introduction.

The bond ordinance comprises the following items: FCC narrow banding mandate for the Police Radio System, Emergency 911 System Upgrade and a municipal telephone system upgrade. The FCC mandated the narrow banding of the current VHF (Very High Frequency) radio system by January 1, 2013; however, the Township received a one year waiver extending the deadline for Township completion.

One option facing the Township was to convert or narrow band the current system to meet the FCC requirements, however, this option would not facilitate and provide the necessary interoperability with neighboring municipalities nor with other Township Emergency Service entities. The option chosen by the Police Department was to migrate to Somerset County’s 700 mhz Public Safety Radio System. This option offers interoperability functionality that would not have been available by upgrading the current VHF Radio System.

“The importance of providing effective and reliable communication systems for the public safety of our Township cannot be over emphasized,” commented Chief of Police Kaminsky.

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The current radio system operates at a channel bandwidth of 25 khz, which is in excess of the 12.5 khz requirement of two way radio users, hence the upgrade to the County System. As a result of several emergency service providers within the Township, Hillsborough Fire and EMS as well as neighboring Police Departments having already migrated to the County System, this has caused field units not to be able to communicate with those public safety agencies.

“The upgrade for the Police Radio System was a high priority for the Capital Planning Committee, but fell outside the scope of routine capital expenditures,” stated Committeeman Greg Burchette, liaison to Capital Planning.

The current Emergency 911 system has been running continuously since June of 2004. It has been determined that the vendor will no longer be able to maintain the E911 system without the upgrade. The upgrade will also make the system compatible with next generation E911 capabilities that may come available in the future.

“The improvements to the municipal telephone system are necessary as it is no longer feasible to upgrade or repair the existing aging system,” added Mayor DelCore.
