

MEMORANDUM

TO: Grace Merkes, Assembly President
Members, Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly

THRU: John J. Williams, Kenai Peninsula Borough Mayor
Craig Chapman, Finance Director

FROM: Scott Walden, Emergency Management Coordinator

DATE: February 28, 2008

SUBJECT: Ordinance 2007-19-40 Emergency Ordinance appropriating funding necessary for purchase of routing equipment for the 911 call center

The Borough's "selective router" (router) is the equipment and system that routes calls to the appropriate dispatch center when 911 is dialed. A properly functioning router performs split-second routing by instant electronic retrieval of caller location information from a database managed by the Borough Addressing Officer, in which the system should instantly identify the location of land-based calls and route them to the appropriate dispatch center for prompt emergency assistance.

The current system is 10-year-old technology, nearly obsolete, that has fallen into a pattern of chronic failures, requiring emergency repair call-outs for which the maintenance contractor, ACS, currently charges hundreds of dollars per hour. These failures are occurring days apart rather than monthly or annually, and during these failures, calls are lost, not able to be transferred, and when retrieved, require dispatch to dial a seven-digit number to route the number to the proper call center. The Borough is potentially liable for a system failure should it result in harm to the 911 caller.

Because of chronic failures of the current system, it was determined that upgrading or replacing the router was in the best interest of the Borough and its residents. The Borough has been working with ACS since 2006 to attempt to upgrade or replace the router but the parties were unable to reach a mutually agreeable solution. This resulted in the issuance of an RFP, for which three proposals were submitted, and the most reliable, cost effective, and quickly deployed system was evaluated for funding.

The current estimate for the purchase and installation of a new router is \$510,000. The Borough previously appropriated funding for a 911 upgrade; however, these funds will only cover a portion of the cost. An additional \$310,000 is needed to supplement these funds.

The administration is requesting that this ordinance be considered on an emergency basis as the frequent failure of the router constitutes an immediate threat to the health and safety of borough residents because it renders the 911 system frequently inoperable.

Replacement of the router will also provide lower cost for maintenance and operations, eliminate expensive proprietary equipment by incorporating “off-the-shelf” hardware, provide the ability to identify mobile caller locations, and eliminate expensive repair and maintenance contracts with third party providers.