



# City of Galveston

## DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

### STAFF REPORT

October 22, 2020

To: Brian Maxwell, City Manager  
Honorable Mayor and City Council

From: Hope Dean, Executive Director & CITO

RE: Consider for approval the purchase of a hardware / software upgrade for the existing Higher Ground Voice Recording system for Galveston Police Department from Commercial Electronics for \$26,248.98

#### I. BACKGROUND

The Galveston Police Department has used Higher Ground Voice Recording system since 2004, with the most recent upgrade in 2014. The system records all 911 calls, radio communications, and some internal phone lines. This system is vital for both prosecution of legal cases and defense of the City in civil actions. Recordings from this system provide evidence of 911 communications between dispatchers and the public regarding actions taken by the police, and records all radio communications between officers and dispatchers. In addition, it records multiple internal phone lines that are used in dealing with the public in regards to criminal cases, where the recordings may be used as evidence.

#### II. CURRENT SITUATION

The hardware currently in use was installed in 2014. Commercial Electronics as the provider of the Higher Ground system recommends a hardware refresh at the five-year mark. Once the system is over six years old, there isn't an option to renew the hardware support coverage. Any hardware support would be on a time-and-materials basis with no guarantee on the repairability of the hardware. They continue to offer a maintenance agreement to support the recording software only. The term for support is from October 1 to September 30. At this time, support for the Higher Ground system is for software only.

#### III. ISSUES

1. The current hardware is at end of support and needs to be replaced.
2. The operation of this system is vital in prosecution of legal cases and protection from civil liability in actions against the City.



**IV. ALTERNATIVES**

1. Award approval of the Higher Ground hardware / software upgrade to Commercial Electronics at a cost of \$26,248.98 through the HGAC Co-op Contract #07-20.
2. Opt to continue with software only support at a cost of \$3660 annually and time-and-materials basis for any hardware support with the understanding repairs cannot be guaranteed base on the age of the hardware.
3. Opt to purchase a voice recording system from another vendor. This would entail additional costs for professional services to implement the new system. There would also be internal labor costs involved in retraining City staff on a new system.

**V. RECOMMENDATION**

Approve the upgrade of the hardware / software system for Higher Ground Voice Recording System through Commercial Electronics at a cost of \$26,248.98 through the HGAC Co-op contract number 07-20.

**VI. FISCAL IMPACT REPORT**

Requested by:	Hope Dean Executive Director & CITO
Funding Source:	Police Department Operating Budget
Costs of implementation:	\$26,248.98.