COUNTY AGENDA REQUEST

Department:	Purchasing	Presenter(s):	Ted Burgess
Meeting Date:	Thursday, April 12, 2012	Type of Request:	Consent

Wording for the Agenda:

Approval of staff's recommendation to issue a request for proposals for a telecommunications consultant, and for the Chairman to sign and execute three-year contracts for AT&T internet, Centrex, and MegaLink services, as well as contracts for AT&T Metro Ethernet and Data Voice, Inc. support services, pending review by the County Attorney.

Background/History/Details:

The county uses 15 vendors for a variety of communications and data-transfer services. The services have been acquired over time, as the technologies evolved and became viable tools for service provision. It is recommended that the county release a request for proposals for a consultant to perform an analysis of the current communication system, and recommend ways to meet future needs at the lowest cost.

In addition, due to rapidly rising charges, it is recommended that the county enter into contracts for certain services as follows:

- A three-year contract for AT&T internet services.
- A three-year contract for AT&T Centrex services.
- A three-year contract for AT&T MegaLink services.
- A one-year contract for AT&T Metro Ethernet services.
- A contract ending June 30, 2014 for Data Voice maintenance and support services.

Note: The agenda includes a request from the Information Systems Department to install a fiber optic cable from the core network to the McDonough Road sites. If approved, the county will no longer need the Metro Ethernet services after installation is complete.

What action are you seeking from the Board of Commissioners?

Approval of staff's recommendation to issue a request for proposals for a telecommunications consultant, and for the Chairman to sign and execute three-year contracts for AT&T internet, Centrex, and MegaLink services, as well as contracts for AT&T Metro Ethernet and Data Voice, Inc. support services, pending review by the County Attorney.

If this item requires funding, please describe:

Funds to pay telecommunications funds are included in the annual budget.

Has this request been considered within the past two years?	No	If so, when?	
Is Audio-Visual Equipment Required for this Request?*	No	Backup Provided with Request?	Yes

**** All audio-visual material must be submitted to the County Clerk's Office no later than 48 hours prior to the meeting. It is also your department's responsibility to ensure all third-party audio-visual material is submitted at least 48 hours in advance.***

Approved by Finance	Yes	Reviewed by Legal	Yes
Approved by Purchasing	Yes	County Clerk's Approval	Yes
Administrator's Approval	Yes		

Staff Notes:

Fayette County GEORGIA

Where Quality Is A Lifestyle

To: Jack Krakeel

From: Ted L. Burgess

Date: March 30, 2012

Subject: Communications and Data Services

County services require the use of various types of communications and data-transfer technology. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Phone, internet, and data transfer for all operations.
- Wireless communications for ambulances.
- Geographic and fixed-list emergency phone notification system for weather alerts and other communications.
- Security alarm monitoring for various locations.
- Cell phones and other wireless communications for law enforcement.
- Land-line phone lines to control traffic signals.
- Redundant methods for E-911 and others to communicate in event of a disaster or other emergency.

The county has acquired these technologies over time as they evolved and became viable tools for service provision.

At present, 15 vendors provide land-line and voice over internet protocol (VoIP) phone services, long-distance, voice mail, wireless communications, internet, maintenance and support of county-owned equipment, wide-area network and virtual private network, security monitoring, and similar services. Payments to these vendors in fiscal year 2011 totaled $488,302.

The need for various types of services, the technologies involved, and the number of providers make this an inherently complex set of processes to administer. Staff have

considered how to structure the most cost-effective communications and data system that meets the current and long-term needs of the various departments. The system must provide the speed and flexibility of communication needed by first responders and other personnel in emergency situations, and redundancies to assure that these needs will be met.

Because of the complexities involved, it is recommended that the county release a request for proposals for a consultant to perform an analysis of the county's communications needs. The consultant would analyze current and future needs, and compare to current capacity. Deliverables would include recommendations to help assure the county pays for only the services and equipment it needs, at the lowest available prices, and is in a position to meet future data and telecommunication needs.

A related issue concerns containment of escalating prices. Four contracts for existing services are available for renewal, and the previous contracts have expired. Three of the contracts are with AT&T, and the fourth contract is with Data Voice, Inc. (please see the attachment for a simplified diagram of the AT&T services). The contracts involve the following:

1. **AT&T Internet Service Contract**
   This contract provides internet service to county government. Internet service enables the various departments to use the Munis system, facilitates e-mail correspondence with non-county entities, permits the fire stations to operate the FirePoint data system, allows the Elections Department to connect to the Secretary of State's computers via a secured data link, and makes it possible to use various other applications.

2. **AT&T Centrex & Metro Ethernet Services Contract**
   a. AT&T Centrex provides telephone service for some of the operations located in the Stonewall Avenue Administrative Complex, as well as the majority of county operations outside the Complex. It provides telephone services to non-county programs, such as Fayette Factor (reimbursed by them) and Babies Can't Wait (paid by the Health Department).

      The contract also provides communication lines for security (cameras, gate access, intercom, and alarms); for modems that control computer-aided dispatch, call location, and emergency backup for E-911; and for two traffic signals. It includes a communications line for alarms at Parks and Recreation.

   b. AT&T Metro Ethernet supplies connections for internet services to county operations located on McDonough Road and Volunteer Way. Through the contract, the county pays for cables that connect a server located at the jail with one located at the Water System. Public Works, Building and Grounds Maintenance, and the E-911 Center are in turn connected to the internet through equipment located at the Water System.

      Internet service at these locations permits the various water plants to share data files with Water System administration, and allows secure data

transfer between E-911 and the Georgia Crime Information Center. The connection enables use of internet-based applications such as Munis, e-mail, Tyler Content Management, and file-sharing at these locations.

3. AT&T MegaLink Circuit Contract

The MegaLink Circuit contract provides phone service and network connectivity to the Parks and Recreation office on Redwine Road. AT&T provides this service through use of a T1 line they own which runs from Parks and Recreation to a county-owned router and server.

The MegaLink Circuit provides internet service to Parks and Recreation, and enables them to use county shared enterprise applications such as Munis, e-mail, Kronos, GIS voice mail, and other applications.

4. Data Voice, Inc. Contract

Data Voice, Inc. provides support for equipment and certain software that are needed for phone service, voice mail, and e-mail based facsimile capability. Under this agreement, the company replaces defective or worn-out equipment, performs preventive maintenance, and re-programs software as needed by county programs.

The county pays AT&T approximately $24,000 to $25,000 per month for internet, Centrex, Metro Ethernet, MegaLink, and other services. With a number of the contracts expired, AT&T has been increasing charges for some of the services over the last several months, and indicating that other charges may increase as well.

A three-year contract for *AT&T internet service*, which provided for a charge of $2,731.50 per month, expired in October 2010. The county had been purchasing internet service on a month-to-month basis since that time. However, AT&T increased the rate to $3,550.95 per month in August 2011, then again to $4,616.25 in February 2012. AT&T is offering a three-year contract at the price of $2,713.35 per month, or a one-year contract at $3,572.35 per month.

The *AT&T Centrex* contract was executed in 2005, and expired in September 2010. Charges for this service are $2,214.49 per month. The rates that make up this cost have not changed up to now. AT&T has offered a three-year contract at the rate of $1,524.49 per month, or a one-year contract at $3,056.52 per month.

The *AT&T Metro Ethernet* circuits have historically been made available on a month-to-month basis. In November, 2011 the monthly rate was increased from $1,242.00 to $1,880.00. AT&T has offered a three-year contract rate of $1,702.00 per month, or a one-year contract at $2,362.00 per month.

The previous *AT&T MegaLink* contract price was $190.00 per month. The charge was increased to $306.00 in August 2011, to $661.80 in October 2011, and to $863.50 in March 2012. AT&T has proposed a three-year contract price of $238.00 per month for this service, or a one-year contract at $438.00 per month.

The *Data Voice* contract expired on June 30, 2011. Historical payments have been $3,333.00 per month. Data Voice, Inc. has offered a new contract at the same rates.

The offered Data Voice contract would expire on June 30, 2014, or could be terminated by either party with 30 days' written notice.

Recommendations:

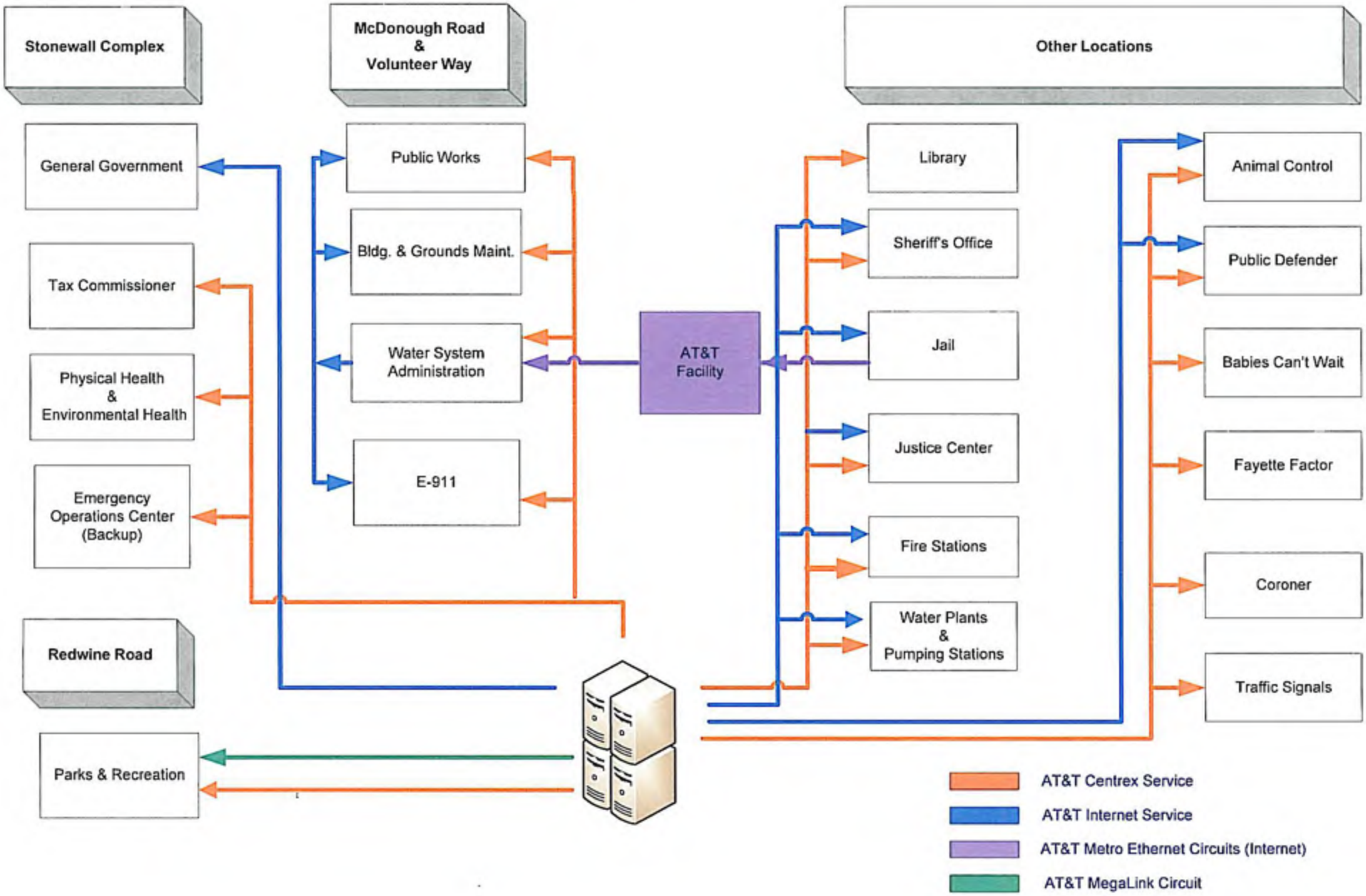
1. It is recommended that the county seek a qualified consultant, through the Request for Proposals process, to analyze the county's current capacity as well as current and future needs. The consultant would work with service providers to obtain the lowest available rates for current savings, and would recommend systems and services to meet future needs.

2. For immediate cost containment, it is recommended that the county enter into contracts for the above-discussed telecommunication services that are provided by AT&T and Data Voice.

   The April 12, 2012 Board meeting agenda includes a request from the Information Systems Department to construct a fiber optic cable from the county's core network to McDonough Road sites. If this request is approved, the county will no longer need the AT&T Metro Ethernet services discussed above. Since the fiber optic installation is expected to take less than a year, it is recommended that the county enter into a one-year contract with AT&T for this service. It is recommended that the county enter into three-year contracts for internet, Centrex, and MegaLink services, because of the substantial price differential involved.

   It is further recommend that the county enter into a contract with Data Voice which would expire on June 30, 2014 in order to stabilize the price during that time.

   Attachment

Fayette County, Georgia
AT&T Internet, Centrex, Ethernet & MegaLink Services

March 2012