



Executive Summary Finance Committee Meeting

DATE: February 22, 2024

TOPIC: AT&T/FirstNet Simplifi Phone

PREPARED BY: Jordan Stephen

Recommended for:

- Action
- Discussion
- Information

Purpose/Background:

Over the past few years, the Technology Department has assessed all of our communication services, and made decisions to help reduce overall operating costs and maintain fiscal responsibility. One of the last significant transitions involved replacing our AT&T infrastructure with IP Flex technology, providing the district with the same volume of inbound and outbound calls at a fraction of the price.

During this transition, we identified two lines related to our elevator service, which necessitated a different approach. Once known as a POTS line, these phone lines are extremely costly. Earlier this year, we encountered issues with one of the elevator circuits at Rutledge Hall, which stemmed from underground issues. We implemented a workaround by rerouting the phone number through the IP Flex circuit, which works, but is not a perfect solution. We researched a newer solution called Simplifi, which is currently being deployed in call boxes and emergency stations nationwide. This cost-effective technology will convert our existing POTS lines into a cellular signal, running on the FirstNet Network, providing priority access, flexibility and redundancy.

District Legal Counsel was consulted and agreed that since these services are part of AT&T and a State of Illinois Agreement, we would not need to have a legal review on these services. Much like other agreements, AT&T has not shown any willingness to modify these provisions, yet the District has approved a number of other AT&T contracts without objection.

Fiscal Impact:

\$86.98 per month (\$43.49 Each). The District currently pays \$355.71 per month for a single POTS elevator line at Lincoln Hall. Initial savings would total around \$3,200 per year.

Monthly Costs:

Qty	Description	Price Per Unit	Total
2	FirstNet Mobile Unlimited plan	\$43.49	\$86.98

One Time Fees:

Qty	Description	Price Per Unit	Total
2	Simplifi Connect 2 Router - LTE CAT4 - With Remote Management	\$399.00	\$798.00
2	Simplifi VoiceLink Smart Dongle - USB-A to RJ11	\$99.00	\$198.00
2	Standby UPS 400VA 255W Surge Protector Battery Power Backup, 6 Outlets - Black	\$47.98*	\$95.96
			\$1091.96

*This estimate could change slightly due to the fluctuation in price. Prices shown based upon current published price.

Recommendation:

It is the Administrative recommendation that the Finance Committee concurs to recommend to the Board of Education to approve the purchase and installation of AT&T/FirstNet equipment not to exceed \$1,100, and move forward with adding 2 additional devices to our AT&T/FirstNet plan totalling \$86.98 per month.