

# LOCALNEWS

## Phone a friend

BY SPENSER BICKETT  
Staff Writer

Koochiching County will replace its 911 phone system before it becomes completely obsolete.

The Koochiching County Board unanimously approved a motion to purchase a new system and enter into a one-year service agreement.

At the afternoon session of Tuesday’s board meeting, Sheriff Brian Jespersen presented a bid to replace the county’s 911 system with a more up-to-date system. Independent Emergency Services, a Minnesota-based company, would provide the system, and consultant Joe Fick was present to answer questions about the system.

The current system isn’t compatible with the Windows 7 operating system, and won’t work with any newer operating systems that come out in the future, Fick said. IES also won’t be able to provide replacement parts for the system’s hardware after January 2016.

The current 911 phone system was installed in July 1997, Fick said, and was put in by IES. Only Benton County has an older system, and that is being replaced this year, he said.

“It’s been one of the most robust systems ever built, it’s been there for quite a while and it might run for another 15 years if the technology was right, but it’s not,” Fick said.

The new 911 system will also be able to update along



STAFF PHOTO BY SPENSER BICKETT

**Koochiching County Sheriff Brian Jespersen, left, discusses the new 911 phone system the county intends to purchase at Tuesday’s county board meeting.**

with the next generation 911 movement, which is an advanced 911 system that can handle text messages, video, or pictures, Fick said, instead of just voice calls.

“We’ve got to get to a platform that allows those things to happen, and something that can be transformed,” Fick said. “So that’s what we’re offering you here.”

The county budgeted \$150,000 to upgrade the 911 system, Jespersen said, which covers the installation of the system and a one-year contract for support services. The support services contract covers maintenance and software upgrades the system may need, which keeps maintenance costs down.

The current county 911 system required less maintenance because the software was less complex, Fick said. The county has a three-year maintenance contract for that system, and when they county upgrades its system, he said, the company will prorate and credit the remaining amount of the contract.

Koochiching County

could save more money by paying for a three- or five-year service contract up front, Fick said. The cost of such a commitment would put the total cost over the budgeted \$150,000, which would mean the county would have to look elsewhere to make up the difference, said county Administration Director Teresa Briggs. The county can also enter into a long-term service agreement at a later date, Fick said.

In other sheriff’s business, the board approved the cost of a one-year contract for a mass notification system, to be split with the city of International Falls and the Rainy Lake Medical Center hospital campus.

Everbridge, a California-based company, provides a mass notification service which allows the county to notify residents of emergencies, Jespersen said. The annual contract cost is \$6,500, he said, and RLMC hospital campus would contribute \$1,000 towards the cost, with the remaining \$5,500 to be split between the city and the county, he said.

With access to this sys-

tem, Jespersen said he’d be able to notify county residents of a wide variety of issues, including rail crossing blockages, chemical spills, train derailments, as well as any potential issues at the local paper mill. The system would be able to call every home with a landline, as well as anyone who registers their cell phone with the system.

The system would also allow Jespersen to be specific when it comes to who he notifies, he said. If there’s a situation that only requires notifying people within a certain area, like a few city blocks, he said, he’d be able to focus on and only notify that area.

The hospital would use the system to notify its personnel, such as if a shift needs to be filled, Jespersen said. The city would allow its emergency services to use the service as well, he said. However, these other groups wouldn’t have full access to the service and wouldn’t be able to reach the entire county.

“Obviously the hospital isn’t going to be able to notify the whole county,” Jespersen said. “That’s only going to be up to me or my dispatch.”

Likewise, Jespersen said the International Falls Fire Department would be able to reach its personnel or city residents, in case of a water break or other similar issue.

The one-year contract means if the year goes by and the system isn’t getting used much, contract would be allowed to run out at the end of the year, Jespersen said.

“If we don’t like it, find out we’re not using it, next year we don’t renew,” Jespersen said. “If something new comes out that’s cheaper, we’re not locked in.”

## Timber sales help off set taxpayers

BY LAUREL BEAGER  
Editor

Timber activities on land managed by Koochiching County last year will provide more than \$2.2 million to the county revenue and unorganized township funds and \$839,983 to six school districts in the county, reported county Land Commissioner Dennis Hummitzsch to the county board Tuesday.

Hummitzsch provided details of the apportionment of 2013 net receipts from the sale of tax-forfeited timber and lands, which showed a total tax forfeited expendable trust fund profit of more than \$2.2 million.

Money provided to individual school districts is based on where the wood was cut and how much wood was cut from within each district. Hummitzsch said the majority of the money to the school districts went to: District 361 — \$129,098; District 362 — \$230,101; District 363 — \$371,653.

“This helps offset the taxpayer,” he told The Journal. “The department costs taxpayers zero because we’re able to pay for ourselves. It’s a unique form of government.”

The sales also provide for a promotional account to cities, based on state law and the county board setting a per capita amount. Five cities and the Koochiching Development Authority usually

receive a total of \$66,555, with International Falls receiving \$13,311 and the KDA \$39,933.

The board tabled action to provide that money until Feb. 18 to allow time to consider whether more money could be provided to the city funding, which is to be used for promotional activities.

Meanwhile, Hummitzsch reported \$3.07 million in total trust fund income from sales of land and leases. The revenue to be apportioned, \$2.27 million, is a result of deducting department expenses, he said.

In the budgeting process for this year, \$68,000 was set aside for forest development and \$45,000 for parks development.

Hummitzsch said the department met its target goals for the year.

“We’ve got some pretty firm goals we need to accomplish to achieve our long-range forest plan,” he said.

Reaching those goals is an accomplishment, he said.

“Trying to whittle out what stands to go into and get our ducks in line and planned and put into sale is a large task,” he said. “And tracking it all is an arduous task on its own.”

He added other work was also done during the year.

“That brought us into 2014 going forward with some new things, and looking pretty good in here,” he said.



### Community Ed Classes

1515 11th Street, Int'l Falls, MN 56649 (218) 283-2571 ext. 186

**Defensive Driving:**  
Monday, February 24, 2014, 9:00 a.m.  
RRCC Theater, \$20/person

**CPR/First Aid:**  
Adult CPR & AED, Feb. 18, 5:30 – 8:30 p.m.  
Child & Infant, Feb. 19, 5:30 – 8:30 p.m.  
First Aid, Adult & Pediatric, Feb. 25, 5:30 – 8:30 p.m.  
All Three offered on Saturday, Feb. 15  
\$45/per session

**Dog Obedience:**  
Mondays, March 3 – April 14  
Falls Elementary School Gym 6 – 7 p.m.  
\$25/person (dog)

**Firearm Safety:**  
Session 1: March 10 – 14  
5:00 – 7:30 p.m.  
Instructor: Steve Battalion  
Session 2: March 17 – 21  
5:30 – 7:30 p.m.  
Instructor: Jim Dornhecker & Henry Carey  
\$5.00/student  
Student must be at least 11 yrs old

**Snowshoe/Ski Rental:**  
Wednesdays through Sundays  
10:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. January through Spring  
Equipment can be signed out at  
Voyageurs Nat'l Park's  
Rainy Lake Visitor Center  
Cost: Snowshoes are free and skis are free to Youth or \$5/adult

**Open Swimming:**  
Adult Workout Lap Swimming:  
Sept. through May  
Monday – Friday, 6:30 a.m. to 8:00 a.m.  
Saturdays, 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.  
Family Open Swimming:  
Tuesdays & Thursdays  
6:30 – 8:00 p.m.  
Saturdays  
10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

**WSI Lifeguard Training and Recertification:**  
Planning Meeting and Pre-test  
Thursday, April 3, 2014  
6:30 – 8:00 p.m.  
Falls High Pool  
Instructor: Amy Amundsen

**Water Safety Instructor:**  
Interest Meeting  
Thursday, March 6, 2014  
6:00 p.m. Falls High Pool  
Instructor: Amy Amundsen

**Cinema Swim:**  
Friday, Feb. 28, 2014  
Movie: Turbo  
6:30 – 8:00 p.m.  
\$3.00/swimmer (payable at the door)  
Children under 10 must be accompanied by an adult

**Driver's Training:**  
March 3 – 24, 2014  
Instructor: Leon Ditsch  
6:00 – 9:00 p.m.  
Mon., Tues., Thurs.  
\$100/student

April 7 – 22, 2014  
Instructor: Tony Casareto  
6:00 – 8:30 a.m.  
Mon – Fri.  
\$100/student

May 19 – June 3, 2014  
Instructor: Tony Casareto  
3:30 – 6:30 p.m.  
Mon – Fri  
\$100/student

July 7 – 28, 2014  
Instructor: Leon Ditsch  
8:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.  
Tues, Wed., Thurs.  
\$100/student

**Tae Kwon Do:**  
Beginners Tues & Thurs 5:45 – 6:45 p.m.  
Advanced Tues & Thurs 6:45 – 8:30 p.m.  
Falls Elementary Gym or Cafeteria  
Instructor: Ken Krueger  
\$25 for an 8 session ticket

**Yoga:**  
Tues & Thurs through May 1  
5:15 – 6:15 p.m.  
2nd floor of Faith United Church  
Cost: \$20 for a 5 session ticket or \$4/class  
Instructor: Shirley Earley

**Chess Club:**  
Mondays, Feb. 24 – May 12, 2014  
3:30 – 4:30 p.m.  
Falls Elementary Library  
3rd Grade and up  
All levels welcome  
\$30 for 12 weeks

Call Community Education at 283-2571, ext. 186, for more information or to register, or view our catalog and flyers at: [www.isd361.k12.mn.us/communityed](http://www.isd361.k12.mn.us/communityed) Or look us up on Facebook at Community Education of International Falls

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**2008 Dodge Caliber AWD ..... \$8,990.00**

**2007 Kia Sportage LX ..... \$5,990.00**

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