
VILLAGE OF SUGAR GROVE BOARD REPORT

TO: VILLAGE PRESIDENT & BOARD OF TRUSTEES
FROM: PATRICK J. ROLLINS, CHIEF OF POLICE
SUBJECT: DISCUSSION: EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION PLATFORM -NIXLE
AGENDA: NOVEMBER 15, 2022
DATE: NOVEMBER 4, 2022

ISSUE

Should the Village Board discuss the Emergency Management Notification System, Nixle and the associated costs to fund the initiative.

DISCUSSION

Background: The Village of Sugar Grove and the Sugar Grove Fire Protection District entered into an IGA for providing emergency notification through Nixle to the residents and businesses back on October 20, 2020. The costs associated for the product was to be split 50/50 between the Village and the Sugar Grove Fire Protection District. The Village and the Fire Protection have split the cost of services for the product over the past two years. Last year's invoice for Nixle was \$5,800. The Village was responsible for \$2,900 annually for the product. The Village's portion of the invoice was equally split between the police department's budget and public work's budget.

Approximately three months ago, the Sugar Grove Fire Protection advised staff that they are no longer interested in utilizing the program. Our annual billing for Nixle occurs in November in each year. We just received an invoice for \$5,800 for the next twelve-month period.

Both entities had the opportunity to send out messages to the community. However, active users on the system have only been the Village of Sugar Grove and a pass through with the National Weather Service regarding severe storms/tornados. The Fire Protection District did not send out any of the messages, since inception. For illustration purposes, the National Weather Service sent three messages regarding severe storms in the area. The Police Department sent twelve messages. On behalf of PW streets, eight messages were sent out regarding snow events. And PW Utility sent out a water main break boil order alert. There was approximately another dozen instances identified that a message could have gone out and is a training opportunity to make sure we utilize the system better.

Nixle allows us as a governmental agency to send out notifications based on categories. How the messages are labeled determine the method of delivery to the end user. For instance, an "Alert" message will send out over a text message and an email to the end user depending how they set up their profile. Alert messages are more urgent/critical in nature. Some examples include: Missing Child, Accidents, Police Activity, Boil Orders, etc. Sugar Grove would typically send out 1-2 "Alert" messages per month of this nature. Another method of delivery is the "Advisory" message. This too, can be sent out via a text and/or email depending on how the end user established their account. The purpose for the "Advisory" message is for non-critical in nature messaging, such as advanced road closure/detour information, known weather watches, or traffic congestion, etc. Sugar Grove would typically send out 1-2 "Advisory" messages per month of this nature.

Staff has informed the other Village Departments of the Sugar Grove Fire Protection District desire to opt out. All Village Departments see the value with the product are in support of continuing with keeping the emergency notification system. The Village moving forward this November on, would be responsible for covering 100% of the costs.

Staff believes there is a need to provide this service to our residents and business today and in the future, however this is now an unbudgeted expenditure of 50% of the costs (approximately \$2,900) with the fire department opting out. The many concerns previously stated has Village Department Heads looking at funding solutions in order to handle the communication during a crisis, or a planned event in a timely manner.

The Village Board has many options to provide staff with a means to funding of the approximately \$2,900 with options listed below, as the list is not all-inclusive:

Option 1- Split the additional unfunded 50% costs equally between the two departments, PW and PD. (Additional \$1,450 each per department)

Option 2 - Charge the additional unfunded 50% costs to the Public Works Water Fund, (50% PW Water Fund which equates to \$2,900 additional to the Public Works Water Fund)

Staff preference is funding the additional costs through Option 2. The Police Department would continue to pay annually 25% of the overall cost (approximately \$1,450) with Public Works Water Fund covering 75% of the cost, \$4,350.

COST

Approximately \$2,900 unfunded budgeted dollars to keep the initiative active.

RECOMMENDATION – That the Village Board discuss options and provide any feedback to staff.