

★ Roll Call Number

Agenda Item Number

55A

Date August 20, 2007

An Ordinance entitled, "AN ORDINANCE to amend the Municipal Code of the City of Des Moines, Iowa, 2000, adopted by Ordinance No. 13,827, passed June 5, 2000, and amended by Ordinance No. 14,176 passed December 16, 2002, by amending Sections 38-81 and 38-84 and deleting Sections 38-82 and 38-83 thereof, relating to discontinuation of fire alarm monitoring by the fire department",

presented.

Moved by _____ that this ordinance be considered and given first vote for passage.

FORM APPROVED:

(First of three required readings)

Glenna K. Frank
 Glenna K. Frank
 Assistant City Attorney

COUNCIL ACTION	YEAS	NAYS	PASS	ABSENT
COWNIE				
COLEMAN				
HENSLEY				
KIERNAN				
MAHAFFEY				
MEYER				
VLAŠSIS				
TOTAL				

CERTIFICATE

I, DIANE RAUH, City Clerk of said City hereby certify that at a meeting of the City Council of said City of Des Moines, held on the above date, among other proceedings the above was adopted.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my seal the day and year first above written.

 City Clerk

MOTION CARRIED

APPROVED

.....
 Mayor

SSA

ORDINANCE NO. _____

AN ORDINANCE to amend the Municipal Code of the City of Des Moines, Iowa, 2000, adopted by Ordinance No. 13,827, passed June 5, 2000, and amended by Ordinance No. 14,176 passed December 16, 2002, by amending Sections 38-81 and 38-84 and deleting Sections 38-82 and 38-83 thereof, relating to discontinuation of fire alarm monitoring by the fire department.

Be It Ordained by the City Council of the City of Des Moines, Iowa:

Section 1. That the Municipal Code of the City of Des Moines, Iowa, 2000, adopted by Ordinance No. 13,827, passed June 5, 2000, and amended by Ordinance No. 14,176 passed December 16, 2002, is hereby amended by amending Sections 38-81 and 38-84 and deleting Sections 38-82 and 38-83 thereof, relating to discontinuation of fire alarm monitoring by the fire department, as follows:

Sec. 38-81. Definitions.

The following words, terms and phrases, when used in this division, shall have the meanings ascribed to them in this section, except where the context clearly indicates a different meaning:

Alarm receiving station means any privately owned or maintained installation, arranged to supervise the condition of two or more fire alarm systems, not located on the same premises as the installation, which, upon receipt of a fire alarm, will take the appropriate action.

Alarm user means the person who or organization of any kind which has a fire alarm system to protect the person's or the organization's premises, regardless of whether the person or organization owns or leases the fire alarm system.

False alarm means the activation of fire alarm system through technical failure, malfunction, improper installation, or the negligence of the owner or lessee of an alarm system or of his or her employees or agents. A false alarm under this division does not include alarm system failures caused by water, gas, electrical, telephone or other transmission lines or devices not under control of an alarm user or his or her agent; the willful act of any person other than the alarm user or his or her agent, servant or employee; and does not include failures due to conditions clearly beyond the control of the alarm user or his or her agents, servants or employees. False fire alarm includes alarms which activate a signal to which the fire department responds with equipment and personnel without regard to whether the alarm is connected to any receiving

alarm station. False alarm includes the willful use of an alarm system for purposes other than warning or notification of a fire. A false alarm does not include any activation of an alarm which is caused by storms, tornadoes or other violent weather conditions.

Fire alarm system means an assembly of equipment or devices or a single device designed or intended for use to detect fires by monitoring temperature, humidity or other conditions, including the monitoring of automatic sprinkler systems and all equipment or devices commonly known as fire alarms. ~~Each premises having a separate connection to the fire department communications center shall be a separate fire alarm system for purposes of this division.~~ A group of buildings with a single ownership, either attached or on a common campus not connected to the fire department communications center, shall be considered a single fire alarm system for the purpose of this division. Any building, group of buildings, or building situated on a common campus subject to a condominium regime shall be, as to common areas for the purposes of this division, considered a single system; if the entire premises subject to the condominium regime, including individual units, is connected to or part of a single integrated alarm system, the entire premises shall be considered to have a single fire alarm system held in common, but if the premises is not so connected, individual units shall be treated as other premises. All other premises not specifically mentioned shall, as to each separate ownership, lease or other interest owning, maintaining or using a fire alarm system, be considered for the purposes of this division to have a separate fire alarm system.

Fire department communications center means the monitoring station for the fire department and is, for purposes of health, building and fire safety codes, the municipal fire alarm system, the fire department alarm system and the remote station service of the city.

Sec. 38-82. ~~Connection to fire department communications center~~Repealed by Ord. No. 14,---

~~All hospitals and state-licensed health care facilities which are required by state or federal law or regulation to connect to a fire department communications center shall connect their fire alarm system to the fire department communications center. Other alarm systems may be connected to the fire department communications center under such rules and regulations as the fire chief shall promulgate, provided no such rules or regulations shall displace any entity required to be connected to the fire department communications center under this section, or applicable law or regulation of the state or the United States, and any entity required to make such connection shall be allowed by such rules or~~

~~regulations to displace an entity not so required to be connected if both may not be accommodated.~~

Sec. 38-83. Information required~~Repealed by Ord. No. 14,---~~

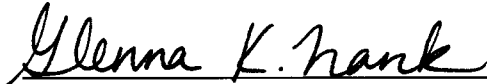
- ~~(a) Each alarm user connected to the fire department communications center shall provide the fire chief or his or her designee the following information and shall modify such information immediately upon being advised of any changes:~~
- ~~(1) The names and addresses of the alarm user, alarm owner if different than the alarm user, and the alarm servicer at the sites of the installation of the fire alarm system.~~
 - ~~(2) The type of alarm system being used, the devices which comprise the system, the number of separate alarms which will emit a sound at the premises, and the number of devices which will automatically act to suppress a fire.~~
 - ~~(3) The names and telephone numbers of three people designated by the alarm user as its contact people for purposes of fire alarm system related matters.~~
 - ~~(4) Such other information which may be required by the fire chief which is deemed necessary for proper monitoring and response.~~
- ~~(b) Failure to provide the information required by this section is a misdemeanor.~~

Sec. 38-84. Standards.

~~The fire chief shall promulgate rules and regulations setting out standards of quality for fire alarm systems and their installation. No fire alarm system shall be installed for connection with the fire department communications center which does not meet the standards established by the fire chief.~~

Sec. 2. This ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after its passage and publication as provided by law.

FORM APPROVED:



Glenna K. Frank
Assistant City Attorney

SSA



**Council
Communication**
Office of the City Manager

Date	July 9, 2007
Agenda Item No.	74
Roll Call No.	07-
Communication No.	07-399
Submitted by:	Phillip C. Vorlander, Chief of the Fire Department

AGENDA HEADING:

Discontinuance of Alarm Monitoring Services.

SYNOPSIS:

The City of Des Moines has for some time provided central station alarm monitoring services for approximately 190 public and private sector facilities at nominal fees. The workload this system places on Des Moines Public Safety Communications is significant and the equipment required to provide the service is obsolete, problem-prone, and in need of replacement. Fire Prevention Code does not require a fire department to provide this service and it is provided by several private sector companies, however Chapter 46 (Fire Prevention and Protection), Section 1 (e) that addresses fees for Fire Department monitoring of alarm systems will require deletion upon approval of this action. The Des Moines Fire and Police Departments and the Finance Department recommend discontinuance of this service after providing subscribers with an adequate sixty-day notice so as to provide the opportunity to obtain service from a private sector vendor.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Amount:

Loss of gross budgeted revenues of \$35,000 annually if the service is discontinued as recommended; versus an investment in excess of \$250,000, plus additional staffing, if the service is continued.

Funding Source:

2007-08 Operating Budget, GE001, FIR040700, Fire Department Operations, Page 165

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

The City currently owns three 1970's vintage Osborne-Hoffman Quick-Alert Model II analog telephony-based alarm receivers (colloquially referred to as "gold boxes"). One of these devices has failed beyond repair and the remaining devices are problem-prone and in need of replacement. Another failure will result in reliance on only one device. In addition, the dedicated server that supports the service is also in need of replacement. Capital investment would be required, estimated to be between \$250,000 and \$1 million for technology expenses alone, and realized revenues would be nominal.

The current system negatively impacts Des Moines Public Safety Communications Center staff, who report constant malfunctions – the computer not working, trouble alarms coming in when the system is on test, missed alarms, invalid alarms, etc. – that consume time and distract dispatchers from 9-1-1 calls and radio transmissions. Additionally, dispatchers spend time working with alarm companies during installations and repairs and with employees putting systems on and off test. The employees of the

companies we monitor often don't understand their systems so dispatchers have to educate and guide them through the processes. Dispatchers often find themselves in the position of helping these customers determine whether or not they want to place their systems on test in order to deal with alarm malfunctions. Failure to receive an alarm or disabling a private alarm system at the suggestion of City staff may expose the City to significant liability.

The City lacks expertise in the engineering of alarm monitoring systems. If Council wishes to continue providing alarm monitoring services, the Fire Department recommends that a request for proposals (RFP) be developed for system design, equipment specification, system installation, user training, and estimate of costs. There is no funding in the current operating or capital budgets for system design and capital acquisition; therefore, a decision to continue this service will require additional appropriations in the next budget process.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION(S):

Date: March 10, 2003

Roll Call Number: 03-545

Action: Amending Chapter 46 of the Municipal Code regarding fire protection systems and equipment, connection to fire department communication center for fire alarm monitoring and removal of underground storage tanks. Moved by McPherson that this ordinance do now pass, #14,213. Motion Carried 6-1.

BOARD/COMMISSION ACTION(S): NONE

ANTICIPATED ACTIONS AND FUTURE COMMITMENTS: NONE