
MEMORANDUM



TO: Mayor Walker and Councilors
FROM: M McPherson, City Administrator
SUBJECT: **Information Item: City Cell Phones and Communication with Staff**
DATE: March 23, 2021

I have made the decision to move staff from cell phone stipends to City-issued cell phones. With the FirstNet partnership with AT&T, there is an opportunity to get phones inexpensively, have the city billed efficiently, and have the technology upgraded annually with little effort on the part of city staff. While a detailed financial analysis has not been completed, there should not be a significant financial impact given that the city is currently paying out stipends to employees.

The reason for this decision is for liability purposes. In this digital age, residents are making data requests for all data, written and digital. Mixing business and personal calls, e-mails, texts on the same device creates liability and ultimately hardship for the employee. Personal phones that are the subject of a digital data request will be confiscated to be forensically examined; it is not sufficient to download the data on the phone as is – a forensic analysis will retrieve any deleted files of interest.

The County eliminated cell phone stipends in 2019 and Princeton PUC has issued cell phones to its manager and supervisors.

In light of the above information, I would respectfully request that if you have a need to communicate with staff, please use email, phone (either to City Hall or, when received, a City-issued cell phone), or text message to a City-issued cell phone. Whenever possible, please use your City-issued device and avoid the use of personal devices. Thank you.