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## Email exchange between City of Naples & Embarq

*Posted: Sep 22, 2009 12:57 PM EDT*

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From: Bill Moss  
Date: September 21, 2009 9:50:30 AM EDT  
To: James Lamb  
Cc: City Council  
Subject: Telecommunications Services

Dear Mr. Lamb:

In response to your inquiry regarding the city's decision to terminate services with Embarq, we offer the following:

The Embarq system has had reliability issues, it lacks convenient user features, and its billing system is unnecessarily burdensome.

The cost to continue with the Embarq system is excessively expensive. Despite an apparent ability to offer savings, your firm has continued to make excessive charges for services until the city initiated a study to reduce costs through another provider. Your firm has the right to maximize profits, and we have the obligation to reduce costs for the citizens who support us.

A competitive environment for phone service with alternate technologies enables the city to significantly reduce its communication expenses for local and long-distance services.

Alternate technologies allow for in-house capabilities of systems changes without service calls and their related expenses.

Overall, Embarq has failed to provide competitive technologies and support services to the city, and it has overcharged the city for the system and service it has provided. The difficult economic environment requires that we analyze all costs of our operations. A new telecommunications systems with alternate providers allow for a substantial reduction in our communication expenses. It is for that reason those reasons that we have awarded contracts to other providers of telecommunication services.

I look forward to our meeting this Friday.

Bill Moss  
City Manager

From: Lamb, James J[EQ]  
Sent: Sunday, September 20, 2009 20:48\  
To: Mayor Bill Barnett; citymanager; City Council  
Cc: Roache, Rob R[EQ]; Zimmer, Erik [CTL]  
Subject: Telecommunication Services

Dear Mayor Barnett, City Manager Moss and City Council Members,

As a long term partner of the City of Naples, Embarq is requesting clarification on the council vote that took place Wednesday, September 16, 2009 to terminate telecommunication services with Embarq in favor of Selpan Interactive and NuVox. It was a great surprise and disappointment when we learned of the Council's decision to purchase a new phone system and change network providers. We have invested heavily to provide a state-of-the-art infrastructure to support the City and the citizens of Naples.

We have been trying for several weeks to follow up with your Technology Services Director, Steve Weeks,

regarding our proposals which would have resulted in savings on the phone services the City currently has with Embarq and to discuss the future of the Nortel phone system. These proposals were initiated by my staff proactively, as opposed to any request from Mr. Weeks. Mr. Weeks never responded to our requests to discuss and review our recommendations. In addition, Mr. Weeks never contacted Embarq to discuss his concerns regarding the phone system or the services Embarq has provided to the City.

According to naplesnews.com, Mr. Weeks cited the failure of the phone system which resulted in City employees not having access to voice mail or the ability to dial city extensions. It should be noted that Embarq ultimately determined the root cause of the problem was a component of the City's network (a router) provided by Mr. Weeks. Embarq replaced that router, with one of our own - at no cost to the City - and no voicemail problems have existed since we solved the internal network problem for the City's IT Staff.

The current phone system has the technology and capabilities to support the City based on our upgrades to the system in 2007 so I would ask what triggered the need to spend budget dollars on a completely new system. I would also like to ask why the City would select a company that has very little experience or track record supporting an account with the importance of the City of Naples.

The naplesnews.com also reported "The City will need to change its phone service provider to accommodate the new system". It went on to state that it was recommended by Selpan that the City move its telephone services away from Embarq and to NuVox. We are not clear why Selpan would be making recommendations for your network. These are two different decisions and have no connection between the technologies. We effectively service business clients, from small business customers to the most complex technology driven Fortune 500 companies, across the country. We have effectively dealt with the many challenges of keeping our customers connected, even dealing with the devastation of hurricanes that have impacted our community. I would also recommend you review the network infrastructure that has been invested by NuVox into the Naples community since disaster recovery technology should be valued as a high priority.

I am sure the procurement process was in accordance with the City's purchasing rules but I can find no mention of a bid for a phone system or phone services on the City's website. The fact that Embarq was not even notified that the telecommunications services were up for bid should raise questions from the council members. Why would the most capable provider and long term partner of the City not be evaluated in the process? We value competition and respect client decisions to select alternative providers, so we welcome the opportunity to present our proposal and solutions.

The City currently has a contract with Embarq for the Nortel phone system that has early termination penalties in the terms and conditions. In addition to the questions above I would like to know if these contractual obligations and the respective financial implications were taken into consideration when this recommendation was proposed and voted upon.

We value the City's business and have a commitment to the local community unmatched by other service providers. We feel Mr. Weeks' recommendation should be reviewed in more detail to determine if this is in the best interest of the citizens and employees of the City of Naples.

I will be contacting the offices of Mayor Barnett and City Manager Moss Monday morning to request a meeting to discuss the recent developments so we can better understand the bid process, the decision criteria and to determine the proper steps for Embarq to present a solution to the city.

Respectfully,


Jim Lamb  
General Manager  
EMBARQ Corporation  
Voice | Data | Internet | Wireless | Entertainment


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