
Sponsor: Public Works

Meeting Date: 11/19/2024

Title: Request of Use of Central Fleet Services Fund Balance

File Number: 2024-520

Background and Rationale:

Ramsey County Central Fleet Services stands out as one of the few major fleet management entities in the area that has yet to adopt Global Positioning System (GPS) and Telematics technology for vehicle tracking and data collection. Central Fleet Services management has identified approximately 900 county-owned vehicles and equipment that are prime candidates for the installation of these devices. The advantages and return on investment from implementing GPS and Telematics systems far exceed the initial and ongoing maintenance costs.

By equipping county-owned vehicles and equipment with these technologies, Central Fleet Services can harness valuable data that aligns with our strategic goals, enhancing operational efficiency for both Central Fleet Services and the various county departments and divisions that rely on these assets to serve Ramsey County residents. For instance, GPS tracking will enable Central Fleet Services management to monitor vehicle equipment usage while safeguarding county assets against theft through geofencing alerts, which provides notification when a vehicle exits a designated area during specified times.

Telematics will provide crucial insights into mileage and operating hours, facilitating effective preventative maintenance schedules that help minimize repair costs. Diagnostic Trouble Codes (DTCs) will be automatically transmitted from our vehicles, streamlining the identification and resolution of mechanical issues. Additionally, Central Fleet Services staff can analyze core fuel metrics such as idle time, engine hours, and fuel efficiency, which will inform decisions regarding the potential replacement of vehicles with alternatives that utilize cleaner fuels.

Moreover, Central Fleet Services staff can capture driver behavior data - such as harsh braking, excessive speeding, accident alerts, and aggressive turning - which can be summarized and used to educate county drivers on safe operation practices.

Central Fleet Services plans to deploy GPS and Telematics devices across an initial 685 vehicles and pieces of equipment, with an estimated total cost of \$500,000 over five-year contract period. This cost, calculated on a per-vehicle basis, covers the physical GPS and Telematics devices, network connectivity for data transmission, a cloud-based interface for configuration and data access, and ongoing support services for troubleshooting.

The devices will be initially installed across a wide range of county assets, including heavy-duty equipment, heavy-duty vehicles, specialized vehicles, light-duty vehicles, trailers, and both front-line and administrative Sheriff's squad vehicles.

Central Fleet Services staff are expected to lead the installation of these devices. However, should there be any challenges with staff availability or if they are engaged with other service duties, a third-party contractor may be considered to assist with the installation process. The initial implementation is expected to take place over the course of one year, though the timeline may

extend depending on vehicle availability and the capacity of Central Fleet Services staff.

Upon completion of the initial implementation of GPS and Telematics devices, Central Fleet Services is committed to collaborating with internal county employees to optimize the use of GPS and Telematics data. Central Fleet Services staff will establish super-user groups from various divisions and departments that are assigned vehicles and equipment containing GPS and Telematics devices, granting them access to relevant vehicle information, including usage patterns, GPS locations (if allowed), and assignment details.

In addition, Central Fleet Services staff will inform and provide key metrics to the broader employee community aimed at enhancing safety and minimizing emissions. For instance, reports highlighting unsafe driving behaviors - like harsh braking, speeding, and unsafe turning - will be shared to support better training for vehicle operators. Continuous data monitoring will also help identify excessive idling and improve fuel efficiency through effective route planning. This initiative will not only enhance operational efficiency but also contribute to a more sustainable approach to vehicle use by empowering employees with information and working with them to better use county-owned assets that serve Ramsey County residents.

The additional \$300,000 requested, after covering the initial purchase and maintenance costs of the GPS and Telematics devices, will be allocated to support Central Fleet Services parts, maintenance, and repair budget, which has been significantly affected by inflation.

As of November 2024, Central Fleet Services parts and repairs accounts are over budget by \$336,000 for the year. An initial review suggests that these overages are primarily due to rising inflation in both parts and third-party repair costs, as well as the aging fleet, which has led to an increased frequency of required repairs and preventive maintenance. To address this shortfall, an additional \$300,000 in funding is needed to bring Central Fleet Services budget back in line. This adjustment will help ensure that necessary services for fleet operators, vehicles, and equipment can continue without disruption.

Recommendation:

The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners resolved to:

1. Approve the transfer of \$800,000 from the Central Fleet Services fund balance to Central Fleet Services general operating budget.
2. Authorize the use of transferred Central Fleet Service fund balance dollars for the purchase and implementation of Global Positioning System and Telematics devices throughout the majority of the county's fleet.
3. Authorize the use of transferred Central Fleet Service fund balance dollars to supplement the budget line items associated with general operations costs for maintenance and repair activities.
4. Authorize the County Manager to account for the Global Positioning System and Telematics Technology Implementation Project budget in Public Works Central Fleet.

A motion to approve was made by Commissioner Frethem, seconded by Commissioner McGuire. Motion passed.

Aye: - 6: Frethem, McGuire, Moran, Ortega, Reinhardt, and Xiong

By: Jason Yang
Jason Yang, Interim Chief Clerk - County Board