



CITY COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

MEETING DATE: DECEMBER 3, 2013

ITEM NUMBER:

SUBJECT: UPGRADES TO AUDIO/VISUAL EQUIPMENT AND BROADCAST SYSTEM AND RELATED CONSTRUCTION FOR COUNCIL CHAMBERS

DATE: NOVEMBER 25, 2013

FROM: CEO's OFFICE/VIDEO PRODUCTION

PRESENTATION WILLIAM LOBDELL, COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR

BY:

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: BILL LOBDELL AT (714) 754-5288

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the City Council:

- 1) Approve designating \$1.6 million of the \$7.1 million FY 2012-13 surplus to upgrade the City's audio/visual equipment and broadcast system used to facilitate and broadcast public meetings in the Council Chambers and broadcast city news and information on CMTV, the City's television channel. The funding will also be used for related construction in the Council Chambers.
- 2) Direct the City staff to issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the purchase and installation of the new audio/visual equipment and broadcast system.
- 3) Direct staff to obtain bids for related construction work needed in the Council Chambers.

BACKGROUND:

In 2006, the City hired a consultant to develop a plan to replace the antiquated audio/visual equipment and broadcast system used to record and broadcast public meetings, news and information on CMTV, the City's television channel. Based on the consultant's recommendation, the City Council approved an \$890,000 project to be completed in two phases: \$495,000 worth of work was approved for the fiscal year 2007-08 budget and \$495,000 was scheduled to be included in the fiscal year 2008-2009 budget. However, revenue shortfalls caused by the recession resulted in the cancellation of the entire project.

By 2013, much of the City's broadcasting equipment was 25 years old, well past its life expectancy and in danger of systematic failure. Finding replacement parts for the outdated equipment has become an increasing challenge. In late September 2013, a piece of audio/visual equipment failed, knocking the City's television channel off the air for weeks until the item could be repaired by using a spare part harvested from another broken machine found in Minnesota. Staff also spends significant amounts of time keeping the current system operational and finding work-arounds for basic audio/visual and broadcast functions.

Earlier this year, the City hired Triton Technology Solutions to develop a plan to replace the City's audio/visual equipment. Working with the City's Video Production Services team, the consulting company recommends that the City spend \$1.25 million to upgrade its audio/visual equipment and broadcast system (Attachment I). The plan includes new cameras, energy-efficient television lights, sound system, video screens throughout the Council Chambers, electronic council/commission voting system, overhead projector, telestrator, and outdoor video monitor and sound system for overflow crowds (for 3-D renderings, see Attachment II). The control room for the Council Chamber broadcasts would move from the City Hall basement to Conference Room 1C adjacent to the Council Chambers. Triton would serve as the project manager.

Also in 2013, the City retained the services of Costa Mesa-based Dougherty + Dougherty Architects to assist in the planning and design of related construction work to be done to the Council Chambers during the installation of the new audio/visual equipment and broadcast system. The work—estimated to cost \$350,000 (Attachment III)—would include the installation of these new items: six video screens, overhead projector, telestrator, lighting and sound system throughout the Chamber, tabletop for the dais, and retrofitted work station on the dais that conforms with the American With Disabilities Act. The project would also provide more work space for staff with three additional work stations in the well below the dais and a long table, chairs and power outlets to replace the first row of seats on the west side of the Council Chambers.

With this proposed audio/visual and broadcast systems upgrade, staff also asked Dougherty + Dougherty to provide a high-level concept plan for a new community meeting room (Attachment IV) in the space of the closed print shop in the southeast corner of City Hall's first floor. Currently, some public meetings are held in Conference Room 1A, a small and narrow converted office space that isn't particularly conducive to public interaction or crowds of more than 20. Many community meetings that can't be held in Conference Room 1A because of space limitations instead are conducted in the City's Emergency Operations Center.

Staff will bring back a recommendation next year to renovate the old print shop on the first floor of City Hall into a community meeting room that would allow for live broadcast of public meetings, better public interaction during more informal public meetings and a quality meeting space for the community. The cost of the project, including new television cameras and sound system, is estimated to be about \$450,000 (Attachment V). If the community meeting room does not get built, staff would recommend a new camera and sound systems be installed in Conference Room 1A at a cost of about \$100,000. Those systems in Conference Room 1A are currently failing.

ANALYSIS:

The City's audio/visual and broadcast system is in danger of a systematic failure because of outdated equipment that, if broken, would be difficult, if not possible, to repair. Viewers of CMTV got a precursor of this when a faulty piece of equipment caused the channel to go dark for weeks until repairs could be made. According to Triton Technology Systems, the Costa Mesa system is the oldest among the more than 30 cities with which the company works.

The new audio/visual system would provide more than essential reliability. Massive advances in technology over the past quarter century will provide stakeholders better interaction with their local government, including:

- Vastly improved sound and lighting system in the Council Chambers for both spectators and those watching on television and the Internet.
- Video screens throughout the Council Chambers to allow for better viewing of presentations and other documents (for instance, agenda items can be displayed on the video). The public meeting will be recorded in high definition, which even when viewed on a non-HD channel, will be a vast improvement in quality.
- A do-it-yourself overhead projector for the public and staff that would generate crisp images on the video screens of the Council Chambers.
- A telestrator that would allow staff and council members to make notes and other marks on drawings and photos that are projected on the video screens.
- An electronic voting system that would provide the audience with the council's or commission's votes on the video screen and on video nameplates in front of each member.
- A cueing system for those running council and commission meetings that show the order of speaking requests by council members or commissioners.
- A special device that would allow City Council and commission members, applicants, presenters and the general public to wirelessly link documents, images and presentations from their own computers to the Council Chambers video screens.
- An upgraded graphic look to CMTV, which would have the feel of a commercial television station as opposed to a government access channel. This is especially important now that CMTV has moved to the prime Channel 3 slot on Time Warner Cable.
- An updated software and hardware system that will allow for more automated programming on CMTV (the City would no longer have to fall back on the static community bulletin board announcements for much of its programming).

While the above changes will be tangible improvements, the backbone of the audio/visual and broadcast upgrades will not be visible to the public. The new hardware and software will bring the City into the more reliable and higher-quality world of digital electronics.

Staff will also enjoy a much more efficient work-flow as the new equipment will allow for projects to move seamlessly across many platforms. For example, a single episode of the Costa Mesa Minute is encoded in multiple formats to allow public viewing on multiple sources (City website, Facebook, YouTube, Costa Mesa TV), but with the new system, one file will be uploaded to all sources through an automated process.

A new media asset management system (MAM) will greatly enhance workplace efficiencies as well. The robust video archive system will allow all users searchable access to the video archives. The MAM will also enable editors to work from any available workstation and have complete access to all files. Currently, editors are tethered to the computer that the project resides on, which often results in only one project getting worked on at a time.

FISCAL REVIEW:

The cost of the upgraded audio/visual and broadcast system and related construction costs is projected to be \$1.6 million. The funds would come from the \$7.1-million budget surplus for the 2012-13 fiscal year. Staff is recommending this as the highest priority discretionary project from the recent capital improvement study session. Approving this project now will allow staff to proceed to the necessary proposals and bids to determine the exact cost of the project. The City Council will be able to make a final determination at the mid-year budget review in February.

LEGAL REVIEW:

No legal review is required for this project.

CONCLUSION:

The City of Costa Mesa has one of the most antiquated audio/visual and broadcast systems among Southern California municipalities, and those systems are endanger of a cataclysmic failure. Staff recommends that the City Council approve an amount not to exceed \$1.6 million for a new audio/visual and broadcast system and related construction costs for the Council Chambers.

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- ATTACHMENTS:
- I [Cost analysis for audio/visual and broadcast system upgrades](#)
 - II [3-D renderings of the Chamber upgrades](#)
 - III [Cost analysis for related Chamber upgrades](#)
 - IV [Architectural rendering of proposed community meeting room](#)
 - V [Cost analysis for proposed community meeting room](#)