



CITY COUNCIL CONSENT ITEM

CITY OF FAIR OAKS RANCH, TEXAS

October 6, 2022

AGENDA TOPIC: Approval of a Resolution authorizing the use of the Court Technology Restricted Fund for the purchase of audio and visual equipment for the Municipal Court.

DATE: October 6, 2022

DEPARTMENT: Finance

PRESENTED BY: Consent Agenda - Scott Huizenga, Assistant City Manager, Administrative Services

INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND:

Article 102.0172 of the Code of Criminal Procedure provides for the establishment of a Municipal Court Technology Fund. The City collects the fee of \$4 from each defendant upon conviction of a misdemeanor offense in the Municipal Court as a cost of the court. The City deposits the fee into the Court Technology Fund, and the fund can be used only to finance the purchase of technological enhancements for the Municipal Court.

The City Council passed and adopted Ordinance 21.5 establishing a Municipal Court Technology Fund on October 1, 1999. The fund shall be used in accordance with Article 102.0172 of the Code of Criminal Procedure and administered by or under the direction of the City Council of the City of Fair Oaks Ranch, Texas.

On January 20, 2022, the City Council authorized the City Manager to execute a contract with Troxell Communications (now known as Bluum Technology) to install a live-streaming system for City Council meetings, which could be expanded to Municipal Court and other committee and commission meetings. The Municipal Court began streaming its arraignment proceedings in July. The total cost incurred is \$33,442 based on current expenditures for the system.

Currently, City Council meetings are live-streamed generally twice per month. The City also streams Court generally once per month. The City also holds Planning and Zoning meetings and other special meetings that could be streamed once per month, on average.

Therefore, the Municipal Court share is estimated conservatively at \$8,360 (25%) based on the approximate number of City Council meetings, Municipal Court proceedings, and potential future commission and committee meetings. There are no ongoing expenditures of the system except for staff time to produce the live-streamed meetings.

Livestream expenses Cost Share by Meeting Type			
Meeting Type	Meetings Per Year	Percentage of Meetings	Cost Share
Council Meetings	24	50%	\$16,721
Commissions and committees (future)	12	25%	\$8,361
Municipal Court	12	25%	\$8,360
Total	48	100%	\$33,442

POLICY ANALYSIS/BENEFIT(S) TO CITIZENS:

Project 5.2.5 of the Strategic Action Plan is to Develop and implement live stream and video capabilities for council meetings. Prior council authorization led to the successful implementation of live-streamed council meetings in April 2022 and of court proceedings in July 2022.

LONG-TERM FINANCIAL & BUDGETARY IMPACT:

As Court Technology Restricted Funds can legally be spent on qualifying items under Article 102.0172 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, it is prudent to use restricted funds before unrestricted funds when applicable. This measure would charge the Court Technology Fund for 25% of the total project cost, or \$8,360. The expenditure would be recorded in the year-end close of the FY 2021-22 budget. The projected Court Technology Fund Balance for FY 2021-22 prior to live stream expenses is \$22,514.

LEGAL ANALYSIS:

The use of Court Technology Restricted Funds for the purchase of audio and visual equipment to livestream Court Proceedings qualifies as a technological enhancement and is an allowable expenditure under the Code of Criminal Procedure.

RECOMMENDATION/PROPOSED MOTION:

Consent Agenda - I move to approve a Resolution authorizing the use of the Court Technology Restricted Fund for the purchase of audio and visual equipment for the Municipal Court.