



Mayor Robert E. Simison

**City Council Members:**

Luke Cavener, President  
Liz Strader, Vice President  
Brian Whitlock  
Doug Taylor  
John Overton  
Anne Little Roberts

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Mayor Robert Simison, City Council  
**FROM:** Dave Tiede, Chief Information Officer, IT Director  
**DATE:** July 9, 2024  
**RE:** FY2024 Budget Amendment in the Amount of \$30,000.00 for Office 365 Migration Phase 1.

**Summary**

This request represents one time funding to hire a consultant to start the Office 365 migration process. The remainder of the project will proceed in FY2025 when additional funding is received. Additional funding will be a combination of one time and ongoing costs.

The City of Meridian faces an important decision regarding its productivity and communication software suite. With the impending end-of-life dates for its current software and the associated cybersecurity risks, it's critical to transition to a modern and supported solution. After careful consideration, including a review of options and risks, the recommendation from the IT department is to migrate to Office 365.

Office 365 offers numerous benefits, including advanced features, compatibility, integration, and security enhancements. Moreover, it aligns with industry standards and offers improved collaboration and remote work capabilities, crucial in today's environment.

Options considered include moving to Exchange Online only for the first year, postponing the transition for a year or more, or exploring alternative solutions like Google Workspace. However, Office 365 emerges as the most viable option, offering the best balance of functionality, cost-effectiveness, and security. While there are challenges such as ongoing subscription costs and initial data migration complexities, the benefits outweigh the drawbacks.

Failure to act exposes the City to significant cybersecurity risks, regulatory non-compliance, and potential operational disruptions. Action is necessary to safeguard the City's productivity, data integrity, information systems, and reputation. By embracing Office 365, the City of Meridian will position itself for continued success on this front.

**Reason for Amendment**

We are bringing this small portion of the FY2025 budget request forward as an amendment to be able to start working on this project sooner. We anticipate the entire project to take 6 months, but this could be longer if we run into challenges. Giving us more time will help us avoid additional cybersecurity risks of being on older technology.

**Recommended Action**

When presented at City Council meeting on 07/09/2024, move to approve the budget amendment.