To: City Council
From: Leana Kinley, City Administrator
RE: Financial Software
Meeting Date: May 16, 2019

Executive Summary:

The City of Stevenson has been using Vision Municipal Solutions (Vision MS) financial software since 2010 when the previous software system was no longer adequately supported. Vision MS has worked for the city and staff was knowledgeable about its nuances, creating outside workbooks to overcome shortcomings. With new staff onboard, both at the city and within Vision MS, it is becoming more apparent that the current software is not serving the city well. Staff recommends BIAS Software to replace Vision MS and to implement that change by July, 2019.

Overview of Items:

Staff reached out to multiple software vendors on solutions to replace Vision MS. Some of them are not serving the west coast or Washington state. BIAS Software is based in Spokane and was created specifically for Washington state cash basis entities.

Vision MS requires additional staff time in managing outside spreadsheets to create reports that are standard out of BIAS (examples attached). There are also process improvements that will come with BIAS, cutting down on staff time. It is difficult to convey the challenges staff experience with Vision MS which are beyond the ability to learn new software.

The financial comparison of Vision MS and BIAS is below. The staff time savings are very conservative and are beginning in 2020 to show the most conservative impact of the change. The software will pay for itself in two years.

	2019	2020	2021
Vision MS			
Annual Service Fee	7,150.00	7,507.50	7,882.88
Staff Time Costs		11,530.80	11,876.72
Total Vision MS Cost of Ownership		26,188.30	45,947.90
BIAS Online			
Annual Service Fee	5,409.25	10,818.50	11,143.06
Installation Fee	11,590.00		
Total BIAS Cost of Ownership		27,817.75	38,960.81

BIAS also offers a permitting module which will still save in total ownership costs after 2021. The permitting module will help the city attain its goal of storing permit records by property address rather than permit number. Nuisance and code violations can also be tracked within the same tool. Currently each year has a new spreadsheet for building permits and there is a separate spreadsheet for nuisances. Neither are easily to run reports on or to view outstanding permits or nuisances.

	2019	2020	2021
BIAS Online Permitting Module			
Permitting Service Fee	1,425.00	2,850.00	2,935.50
Permitting Install Fee	1,590.00		
Total BIAS Cost, Including Permitting		**33,682.75**	**41,896.31**

The BIAS solution is a cloud-based software which allows the city to save about $400 on server infrastructure costs. It also helps with the security of the city's data as currently a staff member switches out a back-up drive every week and takes it home to secure the city's electronic records.

The support from BIAS is also more robust than Vision. There is live support with a timely service level, online documentation and a knowledge database. Vision lacks documentation, has limited staff and a slow response time, which is stressful when working on tight deadlines such as payroll.

Action Needed:

- Approve moving forward with the purchase of the BIAS Software solution including the Permitting Module for a total 2019 cost of $20,014.25.