



Department Source: Information Technology

To: City Council

From: City Manager & Staff

Council Meeting Date: January 19, 2021

Re: Appropriate funds for the purchase of computer meeting equipment and services to improve quality of videoconferencing for public meetings

## Executive Summary

Staff has identified equipment and services that will improve the quality of videoconferencing for public meetings so that all members who are present both in-person and attending remotely may see and hear each other clearly. An appropriation is needed to provide funding to purchase additional computer equipment and software.

## Discussion

AnyMeeting Webinar will allow the faces of up to 12 individuals attending a meeting either remotely or present inside the meeting room to be pinned to the presentation screen so the faces of each person will appear on the screen at all times. In addition, the software contains a feature to allow for a presentation block that can be controlled by a meeting host/facilitator to accommodate a power point presentation and/or podium speaker video while keeping the meeting attendees faces present in the meeting room. Restrictions can be implemented and strict controls put into place to ensure each member is seeing what every other member is seeing during the meeting. In addition, the software has the capacity to allow for members of the public to view or listen to the meeting without having the ability to interrupt the meeting with video or audio capabilities (attendee access only). The security systems ingrained in the AnyMeeting software restrict access to the audio and video portions of the meeting to individuals authorized by the meeting host.

This software solution will allow board and commission members to attend remotely and participate in a public hearing or roll call vote without any concerns regarding Sunshine Law compliance. The prior solution utilized for Council members to see each other when one or members was participating via remote access consisted of a projection of the entire Council dais in one screen so the remote attendees could see the Council members present in person at the meeting. That solution complied with the bare minimum requirements of the Sunshine Law and proved to be less than optimal for the individuals participating remotely to see and have a "face to face" dialog with those members present in person in the meeting room.

An appropriation is needed in the amount of \$37,972 to purchase the hardware and software to implement this solution in sufficient quantity for use by boards and commissions. These funds will be used to purchase two AnyMeeting licenses for \$3,072/year. The purchase of 20 laptop computers, for use in council and board / commission meetings, will provide a camera for each individual in the meeting and a screen for viewing the other members of the meeting (\$34,000). The existing microphones and sound system in the Council Chambers



# City of Columbia

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will be utilized for the audio in the meeting room. A conference phone with two microphone extensions will be acquired and utilized as a backup or to supplement audio for boards and commissions (\$900).

## Fiscal Impact

Short-Term Impact: Equipment purchase and AnyMeeting service for first year \$37,972

Long-Term Impact: AnyMeeting annual cost \$3,072 / year

## Strategic & Comprehensive Plan Impact

### Strategic Plan Impacts:

Primary Impact: Not Applicable, Secondary Impact: Not Applicable, Tertiary Impact: Not Applicable

### Comprehensive Plan Impacts:

Primary Impact: Not Applicable, Secondary Impact: Not applicable, Tertiary Impact: Not Applicable

## Legislative History

Date	Action

## Suggested Council Action

Staff recommends approval of the appropriation.