

Agenda Item Report



Winnebago County
The Wave of the Future

DATE: April 26, 2023

FROM: County Executive Jon Doemel

RE: Resolution Approving \$150,000 from the Spirit Fund to be Used to improve Meeting Room Virtual Capabilities and other Technology Upgrades to Support Higher Quality Streaming with Paperless Agenda Packet Options

General Description:

Request of a \$150,000 appropriation to improve the technology in multiple meeting rooms to allow for better recorded committee meetings, virtual access to conference rooms, and to better implement software to allow streamlined and paperless agenda packets

Action Requested:

Motion to Recommend Passage of the Resolution.

Procedural Steps:

Committee of Jurisdiction: ARPA Strategy & Outcomes Commission Meeting date: May 4, 2023

Action taken: APPROVED Vote: 8-0

County Board

Meeting date: May 16, 2023

Background:

Last year the county board changed board rules to require hybrid (in person and virtual) access to all committee and county board meetings. Additionally, the meetings are to be streamed, archived, and posted for citizens to review later.

Several county board members have requested packets electronically and county staff have requested to have a less manual and seamless committee agenda preparation software to reduce the amount of resources it takes to put a packet together. The county board approved \$25,000 in the 2023 Annual Budget for such software and the county administration is in the process of reviewing several proposals.

In addition to paperless and streamlined agenda preparation, the proposals also allow for higher quality recordings and streaming of meetings. Future videos could include indexing of meetings so that it a watcher could skip ahead based on agenda items which interest him or her.

The county's current streaming process is to use OWL conference room cameras, which can be difficult to hear on the "far side." Many committee discussions are inaudible.

Lastly, the county lacks good virtual meeting rooms for day-to-day meetings with outside groups and stakeholders. Winnebago County needs a few conference rooms which could accommodate virtual meetings.

Winnebago County would also have the ability to post agenda packets to the website more effectively.

Policy Discussion:

Nothing in this resolution would change how packets are distributed to supervisors. This resolution does not change county board rules or the practice to mail packets. However, supervisors who want to better utilize their iPad would have the ability to go paperless with the already approved Agenda Preparation software.

It is clear Winnebago County needs to improve our streaming and virtual experience for our citizens, board members, and employees. It will be more cost effective to include upgrades to the technology in the agenda prep software project.

This will ensure all technology is uniform across the county and compatible with the software we purchase.

In the end, this project will save staff time and allow for a better paperless product. Most importantly, this project will increase transparency for the public to follow their county government in action.

The appropriation requested is estimated to create quality virtual meeting space in all of the county buildings. The priority would be the county board room, CAB 120, Coughlin Meeting Rooms, Oshkosh Human Services, and other conference rooms.

This complies with the Framework of Spirit Fund Spending approved by the ARPA Strategy and Outcomes Commission because it is one-time-spending, will assist in sustainability planning as it will make the county more efficient, and will assist with the quality of life as citizens can better follow their county government.

Attachments:

Draft Resolution w/ fiscal note.