



AGENDA MEMORANDUM

First Reading Item for the City Council Meeting of February 27, 2018
Second Reading Item for the City Council Meeting of March 20, 2018

DATE: February 19, 2018

TO: Margie C. Rose, City Manager

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Appropriating \$249,500 for Arena Wi-Fi Enhancement Project

CAPTION:

Ordinance appropriating \$249,550 from the unreserved fund balance of the Arena Facility Fund for a wi-fi enhancement project at the American Bank Center; and amending the FY18 operating budget.

PURPOSE:

To upgrade the technology infrastructure of the American Bank Center Arena and improve wi-fi capability.

BACKGROUND AND FINDINGS:

The industry standard for upgrading or replacing network hardware is typically five years or at which time the hardware is no longer supported by the vendor. The age of the technology infrastructure in the American Bank Center is 14 years old and current operation of the facility has outgrown the capacity of the network.

Bandwidth for the wireless network, which is shared with other wireless users, is insufficient to support large conventions and productions. This is particularly problematic when multiple events are occurring simultaneously. The wi-fi service slows down to the point where it becomes unusable. If an Arena production is using wi-fi, the limited bandwidth is not enough for ticket scanners, which capture real time patron counts, ticket and seating information, to connect to the server. When this occurs the small amount of memory in the ticket scanning device quickly fills up and staff must stop the entry process to download the data. This impedes the process of getting patrons into the Arena in a timely manner.

Insufficient bandwidth also affects Arena concessions because the point of sale and credit card readers utilize the wi-fi network. This creates long lines and negatively impacts the customers' experience. In addition, there are two portable ATM machines that can only be connected via wi-fi so on busier days they are inoperable.

The original project scope, which included installation by Information Technology (IT) staff, was 10 months to completion. In order to minimize the negative impact to American Bank Center operations, the project was divided into two phases with phase one taking place in FY18 for the Convention Center and phase two to take place in FY19 for the Arena.

During project planning, it became evident that the entire facility should be upgraded at the same time so it was determined that TSA, Inc. Houston, a vendor selected from BuyBoard Cooperative Purchasing, should perform the installation since they would be able to complete the project in four weeks, thereby eliminating any impacts to event operations and reduce costs with a single mobilization.

The current wireless network will be replaced with a high capacity wireless network. IT staff will be installing new switches and SMG will be entering into a contract with TSA to install the network infrastructure, wireless access points, network cabling, and also provide configuration and support for the Arena, Convention Center, and Selena Auditorium.

After the upgrade, the facility will have a dedicated 1GB internet connection to be used exclusively for the American Bank Center wireless network. With these improvements bandwidth will be increased, capacity will be increased, and SMG staff will have a toolset to manage the network and configure the system to provide services for a fee, when appropriate.

The Corpus Christi Business and Job Development Corporation approved this item at the February 19, 2018 Type A Board meeting.

ALTERNATIVES: Do not approve appropriation.

EMERGENCY / NON-EMERGENCY: Non-Emergency.

DEPARTMENTAL CLEARANCES: Legal, Finance, Budget, Information Technology

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

☒ Operating ☐ Revenue ☐ Capital ☐ Not applicable

Fiscal Year: FY18	Current Year	TOTALS
Amended Budget	\$6,766,781.38	\$6,766,781.38
This item	\$249,550.00	\$249,550
NEW BALANCE	\$6,527,231.38	\$6,527,231.38

Fund: Arena Facility Fund 1130, Visitor Facility Fund 4710

Comments: None.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of this Ordinance.

LIST OF SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS:

Project Budget

TSA Quote

Computer Solutions Quote

Ordinance