THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE

Staff Report

Council Meeting Date: October 27, 2020

Subject: City Hall First Floor Conference Room A/V Upgrades – Sole Source Authority

Staff Resources: Dawa Hitch, Dan Phairas

Action Requested: Adoption of a resolution authorizing the sole source procurement from Solutionz, Inc. of audiovisual upgrades for the City Hall First Floor Conference Room.

Background:

- Audiovisual upgrades are needed to the existing system in the First Floor Conference Room to:
  - Improve digital interaction between committee members and presenters
  - Provide committee members, audience members, and livestream audiences the ability to view both presentations and related materials from committee and commission-member Chromebooks to proposed 86" large-screen displays
  - Improve the room's sound quality, and improve audio recording capabilities
- Solutionz, Inc. (formerly Unified Technology Systems) engineered and installed the City's current digital broadcast system, with associated audiovisual equipment in the First Floor Conference Room including a new projection system for displaying live broadcasts of City Council meetings, an audio distribution system for City Council meeting broadcasts and for integration with the room's 15 dais microphones, a Crestron touch-screen tablet controller with coded programming to provide remote switching of the City's cable broadcast signal to the projection system, remote control of the projection system, and remote volume control of cable broadcasts and of dais microphones.
- As part of the digital broadcast system, the First Floor Conference Room is used as an overflow room enabling City Council meeting attendees to view live proceedings of meetings on the City's Charter Cable channel 193. The First Floor Conference Room is also the location of several Council committees and Council-appointed boards & commission meetings.
- Solutionz, Inc. continues to service and upgrade equipment related to the City's digital broadcast system, including equipment in the First Floor Conference Room, per an existing 5-year Service Agreement.
- The cost of audiovisual upgrades to the First Floor Conference Room is approximately $37,000.

Vendor Outreach Efforts:

- Due to the need for compatibility with digital broadcast system equipment, and the need to maintain viability of our existing Service Agreement, Solutionz, Inc. is the vendor best positioned to recommend, engineer, and install audiovisual upgrades consistent with existing equipment in the First Floor Conference Room. Therefore, sole source authorization is being requested.

Council Goal(s):

- Smart City
- Connected and Engaged Community

Committee(s):

- None

Pro(s):

- Solutionz, Inc. will recommend equipment that will work and be compatible with existing audiovisual components already installed in the First Floor Conference Room.
- Solutionz, Inc. wrote the code to program the Crestron Control tablet that operates dais mics, the projection system, and accesses the City's cable channel in the First Floor Conference Room.

Additional code will need to be written for the Crestron Control tablet to operate new audiovisual equipment in the room that integrates with Solutionz, Inc.'s existing code.
- In the interest of keeping the Service Agreement intact relative to the Crestron Control tablet, it benefits the City to have Solutionz, Inc. perform audiovisual upgrades to the First Floor Conference Room.
- Benefits of the upgrade will include better sound quality in the room and much improved visual quality of presentations and of live City Council proceedings for overflow attendees of meetings.

Con(s):
- If another vendor updates code for the Crestron Control tablet, there is no assurance that it will be compatible with the current programming.
- If another vendor updates code for the Crestron Control tablet, it may invalidate our Service Agreement relative to the Crestron Control tablet.

Fiscal Impact:
- Funding for this purchase is to be provided by non-departmental general funds.

Suggested Motion:
- Move to adopt a resolution authorizing the procurement of equipment for audiovisual upgrades to the First Floor Conference Room from sole source vendor Solutionz, Inc.

Attachment(s)
- Resolution

RESOLUTION NO. 20-____

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE PROCUREMENT OF EQUIPMENT FOR AUDIOVISUAL UPGRADES TO THE CITY HALL FIRST FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM FROM SOLE SOURCE VENDOR SOLUTIONZ, INC.

WHEREAS, N.C.G.S. 143-129 details procedures for the letting of public contracts; and

WHEREAS, N.C.G.S. 143-129 (e) provides for exceptions to the requirement to request formal bids for procurement contracts; and

WHEREAS, item (6) of N.C.G.S. 143-129 (e) states that the governing body of a political subdivision of the State shall approve the purchase of apparatus, supplies, materials or equipment without formal bidding when: “(ii) a needed product is available from only one source or supply”; and

WHEREAS, Solutionz, Inc. has been identified as the “sole source” for audiovisual equipment that is consistent and compatible with existing equipment;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE THAT:

The City Council hereby authorizes the procurement of equipment as permitted under N.C.G.S. 143-129 (e) (6) from sole source vendor Solutionz, Inc.

Read, approved, and adopted this the 27th day of October 2020.

_____ _____

City Clerk Mayor

Approved as to form:

City Attorney