



MAYOR & COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

DATE: March 18, 2014

REGULAR

ITEM # 14

AGENDA ITEM: Approve Laserfiche Rio Upgrade Expenditure

SUBMITTED BY: Adam R. Bell, City Clerk

THROUGH: Dean A. Zuleger, City Administrator

REVIEWED BY: Beckie Gumatz, Deputy Clerk
Cathy Bendel, Finance Director

SUGGESTED ORDER OF BUSINESS:

- Introduction of Item.....City Engineer
- Report/Presentation.....City Engineer
- Questions from Council to Staff..... Mayor Facilitates
- Public Input, if Appropriate.....Mayor Facilitates
- Call for Motion Mayor & City Council
- Discussion..... Mayor & City Council
- Action on Motion..... Mayor Facilitates

POLICY RECOMMENDER: Staff

FISCAL IMPACT: \$6,735.11 in 2014 for upgrade and maintenance. \$1,051.75 in 2015 and subsequent years for annual maintenance.

The Total Capital Charge of \$5,683.36 is a one-time charge to cover the one-time charges incurred to obtain Laserfiche licenses as well as the hardware/software for the required 7 servers that constitute the Laserfiche system. The Total Annual Charge of \$1,051.75 will be charged this year and in subsequent years as this covers the Software Maintenance charged by Laserfiche, VMWare and Microsoft. The first year maintenance is due at time of purchase and renews on the one year anniversary after that. This is about the same annual charge Lake Elmo has been paying over the past years. Based on the population formula used for this program, Lake Elmo pays 3.36% of the shared costs.

SUMMARY AND ACTION REQUESTED:

The City Council is respectfully requested to consider approving the software upgrade proposal as presented. The recommended motion for this action is as follows:

“Move to approve the 2014 Laserfiche Rio Upgrade and Deployment Agency Cost Contribution.”

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY/BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Laserfiche is a PC-based and searchable full-text index document management system. The City of Lake Elmo currently uses Laserfiche for electronic document storage and management along with 21 other communities as part of the Metro-INET consortium. Laserfiche allows the user to import documents to an online repository that can be accessed by all city staff. The new version will also allow the public to access selected documents in this repository using a web-based access portal.

One of the most useful features the software offers is the ability to run an optical character recognition (OCR) when scanning and importing documents. What this means is that the program mechanically or electronically converts scanned or imported images of typewritten or printed text into machine-encoded/computer-readable text. OCR is widely used as a form of data entry from some sort of original paper data source, whether a contract, invoice, bank statement, receipt, building permit, e-mail, or any number of printed records. It is a common method of digitizing printed texts so that they can be electronically edited, searched, stored more compactly, displayed on-line. What this does is allow a user to search for any word or term included in the original document.

Lake Elmo has been paying for the current version of this software since 2008 but has not made any significant attempt to utilize it until 2013. Staff has begun importing hundreds of documents and is beginning to incorporate the utilization into the regular workflow. As time permits, staff will continue to import all the permanent documents of record into this single convenient location. This not only will allow the users and the public to access these records with ease, but it will allow the City to greatly reduce the footprint of the paper record that poses a challenge in the City’s limited physical storage space.

The City of Roseville heads the Metro-INET consortium, which handles all the IT support for the member cities. The upgrade to the new version of Laserfiche was expected to occur in 2013 and allow for cities to budget for this expense, but due to various delays this did not happen until now. The shared costs for the upgrade are based on a city’s population and presumed usage volume.

Roseville IT sent the proposed upgrade cost to Lake Elmo on Friday, March 7, 2014. City Clerk Bell and Finance Director Bendel have been discussing the means to pay for the upgrade since then. Because this upgrade expenditure was not previously budgeted, staff has determined that because of the amount and the inability to quickly identify where funds could be shifted from, this item should be presented to Council for approval. Staff did not have time to present it to the Finance Committee at the meeting on 3/14/2014. Because staff was still trying to determine if funds were available elsewhere, it was not placed on the Council Agenda before the packet was sent out on 3/14/2014. The City of Roseville has requested that Metro-INET member cities return the approved cost contribution by 3/19/2014 so that it may proceed to the City of Roseville’s Council for final approval.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION (SWOT):

STRENGTHS: Approving this expenditure will allow the City of Lake Elmo to continue to make progress in reducing the retention of paper documents and saving space. Most importantly, this upgrade will allow the City to improve the data and record management process it currently has. Staff and council, as well as the public, will have improved and increased access to the records, which will save time and resources that staff currently spends working with the record archives.

WEAKNESSES: The weakness of this item is that the \$5,683.36 expense was not included in the 2014 budget due to the amount being available during budget planning last year. The City will have the info for the 2015 budget preparation if this proposal is approved.

OPPORTUNITIES: The upgrading of this software will help facilitate the transition to paperless meetings and city records, which are included as part of the 2014 Plan of Work. As staff further implements Laserfiche into the daily workflow, efficiency in document management and retrieval can be greatly increased.

THREATS: Delaying approval of this expenditure could have a negative delay effect on the implementation schedule set by Roseville IT. As noted, there are 21 member communities that are all in the process of approving the cost contributions. No specifics have been made available at this time as to the actual delay one city would create by not responding affirmatively by the 3/18 deadline.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff is recommending that the city council approve the 2014 Laserfiche Rio Upgrade and Deployment Agency Cost Contributions. The recommended motion for this action is as follows:

“Move to approve the 2014 Laserfiche Rio Upgrade and Deployment Agency Cost Contribution.”

ATTACHMENT(S):

1. 2014 Laserfiche Rio Upgrade and Deployment Agency Cost Contributions