



Memorandum

TO: City Council

FROM: Alfred Lott, City Manager

SUBJECT: Requested change in FY 22 spending for Communications Division

DATE: 05/12/2022

The Communications Division is proposing to postpone the purchase of cameras, camera control units, and tripods for the television studio that were budgeted in FY 22 and instead purchase the equipment in FY 23. \$90,000 was budgeted in FY 22 for this expenditure.

Instead the studio would like to purchase a portable video switcher and related equipment in FY 22 at a cost of approximately \$28,000. The video switcher would be an upgrade of existing equipment that is seven years old and no longer supported by the manufacturer. It would be used in the field for shooting video at summer concerts, Bowiefest, International Festival, National Night Out, the parade, and other outside events and meetings not held at City Hall.

More details are provided in the attached memo from studio staff to the Communications Director.

FY 22 budgeted amount for cameras, CCUs & tripods:	\$90,000
Estimated cost of portable switcher and related equipment:	\$30,630
Less: trade-in discount	<u>(\$2,500)</u>
Estimated FY 22 Expenditure:	\$28,130

ATTACHMENTS: 1. 20220516 - Memo re purchase of portable switcher in place of studio cameras May 2022

Memo

TO: Una Cooper
Communications Director

FROM: Mark Patterson
Audio Visual Specialist

DATE: May 6, 2022

SUBJECT: Requested change: purchase new video switcher instead of studio cameras

Due to the diminished use of the studio at Kenhill by BCMC producers, I propose that we change direction and purchase a new portable video switcher this fiscal year and instead purchase the studio cameras and camera control units (CCUs) in FY 23.

As you know, despite our best efforts, the studio still hasn't returned to anywhere near the usage we had pre-COVID when a majority of our recording slots were booked every week. At this point, we are using the studio for our own productions and to support the five or six producers who are currently making new shows.

While BCMC productions have been limited, we are seeing an increase in the number of city events that we are being asked to cover. The portable video switcher I propose purchasing now would help to support those field productions.

The video switcher is a device that takes video signals from multiple cameras at different angles and on different subjects and is able to switch or blend from one source to another or have multiple sources displayed to show different perspectives. This video switcher is also capable of adding graphics and titles without needing another device to generate those items. The video switcher will also receive an audio signal and simultaneously output the audio and video together for a complete viewing experience. The video switcher we would like to purchase is called a TriCaster TC1 Pro and must be accompanied by a control panel (2 Stripe Control Panel).

Upgrading the video switcher now makes sense for the following reasons:

1. The current portable switcher is seven years old and is using Windows 7, when most other equipment is on Windows 10+. Windows version mismatches can cause confusion, slow down work, and sometimes cause problems and make troubleshooting more difficult.

2. It has been giving us problems. The unit has needed to be restored back to factory settings twice and spent 2.5 months at the repair shop.
3. This unit is no longer supported by the original manufacturer and if it needs to be repaired again, will need to go to a third-party vendor that hopefully still stocks the necessary parts.
4. Major field shoots are now being managed from our studio van, which limits the amount of equipment that has to be set up individually in the field. The current equipment is in a micro desktop case and doesn't have mounting capabilities. The new unit is rack mountable and will install nicely into the new rolling video cart we use in the field.
5. The new user interface is much closer to what we have in studio and in chambers to be more familiar with the other technicians who will use the field equipment.

An added benefit to getting the video switcher now is the manufacturer's trade-in program. The City can save \$2,500 by purchasing now as opposed to waiting until FY23 where we may only get \$1,000 for the trade-in. A quote is attached for information purposes. The actual bids we receive may vary slightly from this quote.

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Please note: Our cameras and camera control units are old and do need to be replaced eventually. In anticipation of deferring their purchase beyond FY 22, they are budgeted to be purchased in FY23.

Thank You