



CITY OF WILLIAMSBURG

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and City Council

DATE: July 1, 2010

SUBJECT: Elimination of Printed City Council Agendas - Use of Electronic Readers

Currently, the City spends approximately \$2000 per year in direct printing costs for agenda packages for City Council meetings and work sessions. An analysis of agendas printed in fiscal year 2010 showed that we printed 1716 pages of agendas and supporting documentation, with approximately 20% color printing. The City prints approximately 20 copies of each agenda for use by Council members and staff. Just for City Council meetings alone, that equates to 34,320 pieces of paper, or roughly 69 reams of paper. The City is heavily involved in many green initiatives, and the elimination of printed agendas would be another step in the City's commitment to an environmentally responsible work place.

Staff has investigated the use of Apple iPad devices for City Council members as the default method by which Council members receive agendas and supporting documentation for each City Council meeting. The goal would be to eliminate printed materials for City Council meetings, and also enhance email and web access for council members.

Information Technology Director Mark Barham has reviewed the current electronic reader technology and determined that the Apple iPad is the preferred device for use in this purpose for several reasons:

1. The iPad has much greater graphics presentation capabilities than any other reader currently on the market. If the iPad is intended to eliminate the need to print agendas and packet information, then it needs to display reports, maps and other printed copies in color.
2. The iPad has annotation software available (a cost of \$7 per copy) that will enable City Council members to make notes, highlight information, apply reminder tags, etc. in the same fashion that they would mark up a printed copy for use in the Council meeting.
3. The iPad is thin (less than 1/2" thick), so it will not be a bulky device sitting on the dais, as would a desktop or laptop computer, and easily transportable.

4. The iPad is a functional computer, allowing City Council members to use the device to receive City email communications, the Internet for research and maintain their calendar and contact information.

An iPad costs \$597 each. Additionally, the City would pay \$17 per device for third party software to enable specific functionality. The elimination of printed Council packets alone would pay for five iPads in eighteen months time.

Once purchased, the iPads would require minimal ongoing support costs. Apple uses AT&T exclusively as its 3G network carrier. Given that the City uses Verizon as our 3G carrier, and AT&T's 3G network coverage is not as wide spread as Verizon in Williamsburg, it is not recommended to purchase an iPad with 3G capabilities. Instead, the plan is to use standard WiFi as the means to connect to the Internet. WiFi capabilities are standard on all iPad devices.

We assume is that all City Council members have high speed Internet access in their homes or at their workplace, and most already have WiFi capabilities as well. For those that do not have a wireless router at home, a wireless modem costs approximately \$50 per device. Staff time to setup and configure the device would be no more than 30 minutes. Given the ubiquity of WiFi in our area, Council members would not be limited to any one location to use the device.

Training for each Council member to use the iPad would be minimal due to the intuitiveness of the device. IT staff would instruct each Council member individually on how to use the device for City specific functions.

If successful, it is likely that other city boards with high volumes of agenda documents, particularly the Planning Commission and the Architectural Review Board, would be interested in the same approach; as well as city staff who support and attend these board meetings. It may be cost effective to issue and reissue iPads for the length of service of PC or ARB members, or do a 50/50 cost sharing arrangement for eligible city staff and board members who would agree to take personal ownership and responsibility for the devices long term. That approach would lower the cost to the city to approximately \$300 per iPad.

IT Director Mark Barham will demonstrate use of an iPad for agenda manipulation at Thursday's City Council meeting.

Staff Contact: Mark Barham, IT Director

Recommendation: That City Council authorize the elimination of printed agendas for council meetings and work sessions in favor of electronic readers.



Jackson C. Tuttle
City Manager