



MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 20, 2023
TO: Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers
FROM: Dave Perrault, City Administrator
SUBJECT: Assisted Hearing Technology

Table with 3 columns: Budgeted Amount (N/A), Actual Amount (\$8,586.42), Funding Source (Cable Fund)

For Council Consideration

Council should consider providing direction on whether or not to move forward with assisted hearing technology modifications to the City Council Chambers.

Background

Staff was previously directed by the City Council to move forward with securing a proposal to add a T-Coil System to the City Council Chambers to assist people with T-Coil enabled hearing aids. The cost for the implementation was estimated around \$25,000. Since that worksession, Staff had worked with NineNorth on having Electronic Design review the Chambers and put together an actual contract for work. During their review, they noted a "hum" in the Council Chambers that they cannot mitigate. This hum would likely interfere with a T-Coil system and is no longer their recommendation.

As a secondary option, they have proposed a Wi-Fi system. This system would work in tandem with someone's smart phone, but a user could also use a T-Coil Neck Loop that would be compatible with the system (example below). A normal user would need to download the specific app for the system used in the Council Chambers, the signal would be transmitted from the Wi-Fi system to the phone and from the phone to the hearing aids. Or if a person had T-Coil hearing aids, they could wear the neck loop and pick up the audio.



A third option would be to use existing equipment, and anyone could request a hip-pack to be used during Council meetings. Although we do have a sign noting hearing equipment is available in the Chambers, we could make a larger, more obvious sign alerting people that equipment is available upon request.

It should be noted that this equipment is only facilitating audio that is directly going into microphones on the dais or elsewhere in the chambers, normal conversations held in the chambers would not be picked up by this system (or any other system).

Budget Impact

The revised proposal for the Wi-Fi system is \$8,586.42, this amount would be paid by the Cable Fund, and is not currently budgeted. Future changes are going to be needed in the fund regardless if this project moves forward or not to keep the fund solvent.

Attachment

Attachment A: Electronic Design Proposal