






Subject: **Virtual City Hall**
 Meeting Date: Tuesday, March 26, 2024
 Prepared By: Will Nyman
 Presented By: Will Nyman

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

That Council approve the purchase of Virtual City Hall in 2024 for 15,000 with funds coming from Corporate Initiatives.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT: (Check all that apply)

	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
High Quality Infrastructure		Economic Resilience		Quality of Life		Effective Leadership		Level of Service	

RELEVANT LEGISLATION:

Provincial (cite)- N/A

Council Bylaw/Policy (cite)- N/A

BACKGROUND/PROPOSAL:

There has been a greater demand from the public for the County to have more self-serve options for bill payment, tax certificates and account balance enquiry. Staff have begun doing research and would like to purchase Virtual City Hall, Virtual City Hall is software that integrates with our website and financial system and allows ratepayers to pay bills, view their account balances and request tax certificates online.

DISCUSSION/OPTIONS/BENEFITS/DISADVANTAGES/OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

As our population gets younger there is a much greater demand for self-serve options. Rate Payers want to be able to view their balances, pay their utilities/taxes, and law firms would like to get tax certificates whenever they want, quickly and at any time. Virtual City Hall is a 24/7 option and allows much more flexibility for our rate payers and they will no longer be tied to our hours of operation.

Virtual City Hall also creates capacity for staff without adding staff. Automation creates self-service options and cuts down on staff time dealing with these requests. This frees up time for new projects and added services.

Virtual City is increasing our level of services while adding capacity for a low yearly cost.

FINANCIAL & STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:

Virtual City Hall costs \$10,000 per year with a one-time cost of \$15,000 for implementation. The one-time implementation will be funded from Corporate Initiatives and the yearly cost will come out of the operating budget. This will be a \$10,000 increase in our IT software in the 2025 budget.

There will be staffing impacts, firstly it will take staff time to train and implement. After that it will save staff time and create capacity in corporate services as staff will have fewer requests for balances, tax certificates and telephone payments. This software will also give us a better ability to move forward with paperless billing, which saves in postage, staff time and printing costs.



REQUEST FOR DECISION

In 2023, Kneehill County staff processed 380 tax certificates, incurring an estimated staff cost of \$2,261. Additionally, addressing balance inquiries demanded considerable time, accounting for approximately \$12,600 in staffing expenditures. Introducing this software solution promises to mitigate these expenses. While complete elimination of costs may not be feasible, the implementation of this software is anticipated to significantly reduce staffing expenditures related to these activities.

RECOMMENDED ENGAGEMENT:

Directive Decision (Information Sharing, One-Way Communication)

Tools:

Individual Notification

Other:

ATTACHMENTS:

COUNCIL OPTIONS:

- 1- Recommended Motion
- 2- Council Receives for information

FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS:

APPROVAL(S):

Mike Haugen, Chief Administrative Officer

Approved-

