

To: President and Members of the Munster Town Council

From: Patricia Abbott, Controller/Interim Town Manager

Date: March 3, 2025

Re: Agreement for IT Services

In 2017, the Town engaged an outside contractor to handle its IT needs. Prior to that, it was conducted in-house. One of the reasons for the change was that the IT infrastructure needs had grown too large for one employee to handle. As the Town reaches the end of the current contract, other options were explored.

The Town and the School Town have long worked together on some related technology needs such as the phone system and connectivity. An ad hoc partnership was formed primarily between the Police Department and the School Town with the camera systems. From this grew the idea that a formal partnership could be mutually beneficial to both entities. The agreement presented this evening is the result.

Under the terms of the agreement, the School Town will provide managed IT services to the Town to include maintenance and repair work, software updates, patches, virus protection, cyber security and disaster recovery services. In short, all the IT services a municipality needs. To do this, the School Town will hire an additional staff member who will be primarily focused on the Town of Munster.

Currently, the School Town has IT technicians assigned to each of their facilities that also work together on all large projects. The new employee will follow this pattern with the Town being his or her assigned facility. This allows the Town to have someone with a deep knowledge of its systems while also having the support of a larger staff when there are big projects. At the same time, the School Town has additional staff to assist when they have a big project.

There will be a monthly payment of \$16,000.00 to the School Town for these services, which is slightly below the monthly cost currently paid to the third-party provider. It is a two-year agreement with a review of fees after the first year. Both parties can terminate the agreement for any reason with a ninety-day written notice.

Once approved, the parties will enter a transition period where the School Town moves the Town away from the third-party provider. This will be accomplished by April 20, 2025, the expiration of the current agreement with the contractor. During this transition, the School Town will invoice the Town at a rate of \$160.00/hour for work done by their staff up to the monthly amount of \$16,000.00.

Staff of both the Town and School Town believe this can be a good partnership and example of public entities working together to create efficiencies and to maximize use of our resources. The School Board approved the agreement at their meeting on February 24, 2025.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

By motion and roll call vote, approve the Agreement for IT Services with the School Town of Munster.