

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: PURCHASE OF CITY HALL AUDITORIUM SOUND SYSTEM EQUIPMENT

BACKGROUND:

The sound system currently in the Ames City Auditorium (ACA) was installed in 2012. While the coverage of the system is sufficient, it does not generate adequate sound pressure levels necessary for live concert production. Speaker components in the system are also outdated and nearing the end of their serviceable life. Some internal speaker components have been replaced due to failure in recent years; however, spare parts are becoming more difficult to find for the current speakers.

The Auditorium Manager has expertise in designing sound systems and developed a list of equipment for the ACA. **This new equipment will replace the front of house speakers which will result in a system that is in line with current audio production trends, be more efficient, and provide desired coverage to all seating areas. This will also allow staff to have more flexible control of speaker zones within the facility.**

On August 4, 2025, Invitation to Bid (ITB) #2025-010 was released and closed on September 5, 2025. The bid was for equipment only as staff will be performing the installation. Four vendors submitted responses with the results shown below:

Bidder	Bid Amount
Sound Productions, LLC Irving, TX	\$ 81,110.00
Forte Studios (Jacobsen Enterprises, LLC) Boone, IA	\$ 98,015.77
Tri-City Electric Company of Iowa Davenport, IA	\$131,562.66
Iowa Sound, LC Ankeny, IA	\$138,681.64

The low bid submitted by Sound Productions, LLC was reviewed and deemed acceptable. The project budget contains \$150,000 for equipment and \$25,000 for electrical work, for a total of \$175,000. Because the bid came in significantly under the equipment budget, staff is electing to increase the quantities of two items included in the vendor's response. The items and the rationale for adding them are as follows:

- Two additional (2) active line array cabinet speakers at a cost of \$2,600 each (\$5,200 total). With these two additions, there will now be eight (8) speakers which will increase the sound coverage in the auditorium balcony.
- Two (2) flying bumpers for the balcony line array speakers at \$495 each (\$990 total). These bumpers are rigging hardware required to safely suspend the speakers from the ceiling or wall rather than ground-stacking them which takes up floor space.

These additions increase the total project cost by \$6,190, bringing the revised equipment purchase to \$87,300. A separate component of this project includes electrical work that will need to be performed to provide electrical connections to the aforementioned equipment. The electrical portion is currently out for bid with a cost estimate of \$25,000.

The total cost for the equipment (\$87,300) and estimated electrical work (\$25,000) is \$112,300. Funding available for this project is \$175,000.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Award a contract to Sound Productions, LLC of Irving, TX, for the purchase of the front of house speaker system and additional equipment in the amount of \$87,300.
2. Accept the Report of Bids, but do not award a contract at this time.
3. Refer back to staff to redesign the project.

CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

The purchase of the new sound system will provide the City Hall auditorium with updated technology, improved sound quality, and greater flexibility to meet current and future performance needs. Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council adopt Alternative No. 1 as described above.