

## AGENDA ITEM BRIEFING

Commissioners Court – November 02, 2021

**AI Number:** 83198

**Information:** Requesting authority to pay for Hidalgo County Courthouse Wi-Fi connectivity and telephone expenditures to establish reliable communication systems.

**Description of AI:** Approval of expenditures

**Funding Source:** American Rescue Plan Fund

**Account No.:** 1-1290-441-62-115-101-1-XXX

**Requested by:** Sergio Cruz, Budget Officer

**Department:** Budget & Management

**Prepared by:** Joely Garza, Accountant

**Department:** Budget & Management

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### **Background:**

In an effort to comply with COVID-19 health and safety guidelines, the recent construction of the Hidalgo County Courthouse requires telephone and Wi-Fi connectivity systems in order to relay communication effectively and efficiently.

On May 10, 2021 the U.S. Department of the Treasury announced the launch of the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds, established by the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, to provide \$350 billion in emergency funding for state, local, territorial, and Tribal governments. It allows recipients to use funds for revenue replacement due to reduction in revenue as a result of COVID-19.

### **Compliance:**

The Purchasing Department followed compliance with Texas Local Government Code 262.024(2), Discretionary Exemption, which allows the County to procure goods and services as necessary without the requirement of a competitive solicitation process. Services were also made utilizing the County's adopted procurement process, such as utilization of competitive quotes and purchasing cooperatives. Expenditures exceeding a threshold were also subject to price verification and the procurement of services complies with 2 CFR 200 requirements.

**Administration:**

Approval of the item is consistent with Hidalgo County's intended purpose to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. The goal is to provide efficient and effective delivery of services in light of change in technology, the public's expectations and the area's population and economy.

**Agenda Item Caption**

ARPA - American Rescue Plan Act Funds (1290):

A. Discussion, consideration, and action to approve the payment of the Hidalgo County Courthouse communications system for the period in which the COVID-19 public health and economic crisis is in effect. As necessary, use American Rescue Plan Act Funds loss revenues to cover costs not accounted for in the current budget and cannot be lawfully funded by line item, allotment or allocation in connection with the ongoing COVID-19 public health and economic crisis; the Court, having reviewed the Agenda Item Briefing, herein finds that such expenditures are reasonable and necessary for the intended use.

B. Approval of 2021 Interdepartmental transfer in the amount of \$472,169.58.

**Recommendations:**

The Department of Budget and Management recommends approval of the use of ARPA funds for Hidalgo County Courthouse Wi-Fi and telephone communication system installation expenditures as they are reasonable and necessary to relay important information. Such expenditures were not previously budgeted for, due to reduction of revenues resulting from the COVID-19 public health crisis. Expenditures will be charged to the American Rescue Plan Act Fund.