



February 23, 2022

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**Governing Board Communication**

**TO: MERA Governing Board**  
**FROM: Mary Morris-Mayorga, Interim Executive Officer**  
**SUBJECT: REGIONAL GOVERNMENT SERVICES SHARED SOFTWARE COST**

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Recommended Action

For information only, no action is requested at this time.

Background

Regional Government Services (RGS) provides financial accounting and reporting through the contract with MERA; this was previously performed through a contract with the Town of Corte Madera and transitioned last year. The financial accounting software, QuickBooks, currently resides on an RGS staff computer with a single-user license and is in need of an update to the current version. QuickBooks is now annual subscription based which is fairly standard for software programs now.

As communicated last year, the Staffing Plan incorporates a Finance Technician to perform some duties which are currently performed by the Finance Director at a cost-savings to MERA. In order to facilitate shared software access to both the Finance Director and Technician along with the recommended practice of business continuity planning, QuickBooks needs to be stored on a server allowing remote access.

RGS Information Technology staff have reviewed options for implementing this change and, after testing, determined that the most cost effective and efficient option is to install QuickBooks along with standard office programs on a dedicated server. The costs associated with this include a one-time setup charge of \$2,600 and monthly software subscription fees totaling \$5,532/year. These administrative costs would be charged by RGS in accordance with the existing agreement as a component of the monthly invoice. As an option to the current QuickBooks software, NetSuite was compared; however, the annual cost for this would be \$12,000.

Fiscal Impact

The Fiscal Year 2021/22 Budget for Fund 70030 (Operating) includes funding for Contract Services/RGS in the amount of \$191,605 with a fiscal year projected actual of \$180,000. This would leave approximately \$11,000 to cover the one-time and annual costs for this year, so is well within budget.