The Berrien County Printing Department has been successfully providing essential services to the county for many years.

Printing trends have always been monitored to make sure that our department extracts maximum value from our machinery for cost, and that the machinery does not outweigh the cost value.
At critical points in time, it is necessary to change and upgrade machines and services to keep up with ever changing demands, and the technology that goes with it.
Several of our current machines are over 20 years old, and have become outdated and unserviceable.
• Heidelberg is the manufacturer of our printing press, Quickmaster 46-2, and it has been under maintenance contract for many years, since purchase (1998?). (We currently print envelopes and larger NCR form orders on the press).

• Heidelberg had been providing preventative maintenance on the Quickmaster press until the end of 2014, when they stopped offering the service.

• A 3rd party vendor (Presstek/Mark Andy) offered to provide maintenance for the press since then, for approximately $5,000 per year.

• As of 2020, this vendor has now also declined to service the machine due to its age, availability of parts and lack of technicians.

• We were able to negotiate a maintenance contract just for 2020 at the cost of $4,200 for this year, but it will not be supported moving forward. (The purchase order has NOT been cut yet).
In 2015, it was necessary to take the platemaker off the Berrien County network, as Heidelberg stopped supporting the platemaker’s software and yearly maintenance on the actual machine. (The platemaker makes image imprints onto plates to be run on the printing press). This left us with TWO options:

• Purchase a new platemaker for $25,000-$30,000, **OR**

• Take the older computer offline, which required us to send jobs manually via flash drive to the platemaker.

The flashdrive option is a precarious band-aid that is only a temporary solution.
The suspension feeder, used to insert envelopes into the printing press, is also over 20 years old. The company that manufactured the machine went out of business almost 10 years ago.

We are unable to procure a service contract for this machine or any service or parts, as they are no longer offered. By anyone.

These and similar machines that provide this service are no longer available to purchase new.
• The parts and consumable materials required to maintain the press and platemaker for each year are expensive and becoming more and more difficult to find. This also makes them increasingly expensive.

• Approximately every 5 years, the press rollers need to be replaced. The last time they were replaced was in 2013, so they are past due. The cost for the rollers this year would be $4,251.00.

• In addition, we spend approximately $2000-$3000 per year in consumables (plates, varnishes, cleaners, ink, etc...).
Currently...

In the last few years, a growing percentage of NCR jobs have been printed on our hi-speed black ink copier (Oce Varioprint) instead of the press. In the last 6 months, about 50% have moved over. The cost to print is significantly lower than running on press and requires no setup. As of January, 2020, ALL NCR is now printing on the Varioprint copier.
The only item that still needs to print on the Quickmaster press is envelopes. We currently print approximately **500,000 envelopes per year.**
A skilled tradesperson is required to operate the press. As technology has improved and simplified, this trade has all but disappeared.

Most press operators have now retired, and the few that still know this trade require a premium hourly rate which the county does not offer.

Sadly, our pressman, Eric Braley passed away January 26th of this year after 26 years at Berrien County Printing.

We will not be able to replace him.
In summary for 2020:

• The cost to maintain the printing press, platemaker, envelope feeder, new rollers and supplies for 2020: $10,000 +.

• If the platemaker breaks down, we would need to purchase a new one for $25,000 - $30,000.

• We urgently need to hire a trained and skilled press operator, who is almost impossible to find, and whose salary would NOT fit in our current budget.
After doing some research and contacting a few vendors for ideas, services and availability, there are a few comparable digital solutions that will improve speed and quality while decreasing costs:

A FORMAL BID will provide more accurate numbers, detailed specifications and information.
Based on a **GENERAL RANGE** of variables, the basic, **BALLPARK** costs are as follows for either option:

**LEASE:** 60 month for $450-$600 monthly
**SERVICE CONTRACT:** (Approx) $2000 - $2500 yearly
**CONSUMABLES:** $4000 - $5000 yearly

**PURCHASE OPTION:** $20,000 - $30,000
**SERVICE CONTRACT:** (Approx) $2000 - $2500 yearly
**CONSUMABLES:** $4000 - $5000 yearly
Moving Forward…

SELLING CURRENT EQUIPMENT:

• A few vendors have been asked to see if there is ANY interest in purchasing and removing the older equipment (including Heidelberg).

• At this time, there is little to no interest and hopefully we will be able to sell the machines (together) for (hopefully) at least $5000.

STAFF:

• All NEW digital equipment options are more user-friendly and require minimal training. This allows us to hire an employee with less printing experience, and to have a seasoned Imaging Technician train the new employee.
Moving Forward...

FORMAL BID

• At this time, I am requesting approval from the board to move forward with RFP to attain formal, multiple bids, plus multiple options for an envelope printer.

QUESTIONS? SUGGESTIONS?