

City of Culver City, California
City Council Agenda Item Report

Meeting Date: 12/22/08		Item Number: <u>A-4</u>	
AGENDA ITEM: Adoption of a Resolution Establishing a City Council Policy Related to Operating Policies and Procedures for the City's Governmental Access Channel.			
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Fiscal Impact: Yes ☒ No ☐		General Fund: Yes ☐ No ☒	
Public Hearing: ☐		Action Item: ☒ Attachments: ☒	
Public Notification: Master E-Mail Notification List on October 22, 2008; Advertisement in Culver City Observer October 23, 2008.			
Department Approval: Martin R. Cole (12/17/08)		City Attorney Approval: Carol Schwab (by R. Miranda) (12/17/08)	
Chief Financial Officer Approval: Jeff Muir (by M. Noller) (12/17/08)		City Manager Approval: Jerry B. Fulwood (12/17/08)	
<u>RECOMMENDATION:</u> Staff recommends the City Council adopt a resolution establishing a policy related to operating policies and procedures for the City's Governmental access channel. <u>BACKGROUND:</u> The City of Culver City currently has a Governmental Access Channel ("GAC") provided under the City's former Franchise Agreement with Time Warner Cable. (As the Council may recall, the long-standing process of local franchising was replaced with a Statewide franchising process through the passage of AB 2987 in 2006) Through utilization of the GAC, the City has the ability to not only air Council, Agency and Commission meetings, but expand the programming to include events, programming and public outreach notification. At this time, the programming on Culver City's Channel 35 has been limited only to live broadcast of meetings for its government bodies. Over the last several years, there have been several measures developed to provide effective and direct public notification procedures to encourage community involvement in government activity. To this end, the enhancement of the City's GAC would work to expand this objective and provide an additional medium through which to communicate with Time Warner cable television subscribers. Prior to commencing activities beyond the current uses, however, it is prudent to establish guiding procedures and policies. <u>DISCUSSION:</u>			

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In an effort to develop appropriate policies and procedures for Culver City, best practices were examined among other cities within the area to include Beverly Hills, West Hollywood, Santa Monica, Torrance and Glendale. These cities were chosen not only by their proximity, but also due to their established success in providing high quality television services to their communities.

Each city utilized a different model/approach regarding channels and electronic bulletin boards, however, all of the stations researched had dedicated full time staff and studio facilities, in addition to a pool of contractors for special projects. Funding for the stations ranged from direct allocations derived by the Franchise tax/PEG support fees from associated cable providers to direct General Fund allocations. The largest annual budget was \$1,000,000 a year. A sample of programming for each of these cities has been attached for your review (Attachment 1).

In reviewing these various operating models and procedures, staff has assembled a proposed mission and programming policy for consideration that would establish a consistent and clear set of parameters to effectively manage the operation of the GAC (Attachment 2). Further, staff recommends that the GAC feature information that is of value and interest to the community which does not promote any commercial product, service or personal opinion.

Statement of Mission and Policy

The mission of the GAC ("CCTV 35") is to provide information to the residents of Culver City concerning community issues, policies, events and services. Through both municipal and original programming, CCTV 35 will serve to create a greater awareness of local government and to facilitate the community's participation in the decision-making process and in activities throughout the Culver City community.

To achieve this mission, staff proposes the following goals.

1. Promote accessibility to Culver City government through live broadcast and scheduled replays of the activities and deliberations of the following bodies of the City of Culver City: City Council, Redevelopment Agency, Planning Commission, Parks, Recreation, and Community Services Commission, Cultural Affairs Commission and Civil Service Commission.
2. Provide informative and original video programming increasing the public's awareness of the City's cultural, educational and other municipal resources and activities; and,
3. Utilize the GAC to distribute information on the above topics authorized by the City through the broadcast of an electronic bulletin board.

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Proposed Programming Policies

It is recommended CCTV 35 provide direct, non-editorial information to Culver City residents concerning the operation and deliberations of City government and its activities and events. CCTV 35 shall not be a political forum, or a means of building support for any particular policy or individual. All live programming, and replay of such programming, will be unedited.

- Live Broadcast - Live cablecasting of Council/Agency/Commission meetings and other selected City programs and events.
- Tape delayed cablecasting – City meetings, events and programs that are replayed at a later time and/or date.
- Locally produced cablecasting - Programs produced by the City to illustrate the function or operations of City government including talk shows, tours of government facilities and programs featuring City services, employees or cultural assets.
- Outside resource programs - Programs that are produced by and/or for other government agencies that are consistent with the primary objectives of CCTV 35 to include, but not be limited to, programming from other municipalities
- CCTV 35 may broadcast special City Council/Agency meetings or City or Agency related events that all City Council/Agency members are invited to attend (e.g. groundbreakings, etc.), where such event is consistent with the GAC's mission statement and policies.
- CCTV 35 may only air programming related to City events, advisory activity or co-sponsored events, as such events are defined by the Culver City Municipal Code (CCMC) and Council Policy, within the City or other programming as noted above. No individual or organization may submit material for broadcast on this channel. (Opportunities for such display may be available though Time Warner Cable public access channel).
- Bulletin Board notices will be limited to City sponsored or co-sponsored events, as such events are defined by the CCMC and City Council Policy, upcoming meetings, agenda items and programs. A sample of a bulletin board notice has been included in Attachment 3.

The channel is not intended or constituted as a public forum. Programming shall not:

- Be used as consensus building for an individual or cause and shall not cover proceedings related to upcoming elections,(including, but not limited to, candidate statements and speakers forums).
- Be utilized as a political forum or a means of building support for any particular policy, cause or individual. (Note: the bi-annual candidates forum hosted by the

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League of Women Voters (a non-partisan group) would remain eligible for broadcast.)

Approach

Because of the limited fiscal resources available, it is staff's recommendation to initiate the enhanced operation of the GAC in a conservative, controlled, tiered process over the course of eighteen months that would allow for greater expansion in City-produced programming as opportunities and resources become available.

Tier I (1 - 12 months)

Staff proposes to being expanded use of the GAC with the periodic rebroadcast of City Council, Agency, and Commission meetings. Additionally, once the rebroadcast schedule is stable, programming developed by Culver City (Art of Speaker's Series, Council/Agency meeting playbacks etc.) would be included in the broadcast rotation. Electronic bulletin board notices will be developed utilizing existing PowerPoint tools and could be implemented with current staffing resources. Additionally, the first tier would focus on streamlining technical execution, developing title listing with Time Warner and managing the current playback system. This tier may also allow for some limited airing of programs developed by other municipalities as approved by the City Manager (Attachment 4). Given that the channel would not be airing a full flight of programs, it is recommended that programming be available from select hours such as from 10:00 AM to 10 PM. It is proposed that this tier would be in effect for approximately six months.

Tier II (12-24 months)

Once the initial stabilization period has been achieved, and financial resources being available, a more aggressive programming selection could be made available through other municipalities and government organizations. While there would be some fees associated with purchasing these programs, several programs from other municipalities via our membership in Scan Notoa (Scan Notoa is a nationwide professional organization comprised of municipalities and cable television operators), have already been made available for airing distribution at no cost (Exhibit B). In addition, our participation in Scan Notoa will also allow the City/Agency to share their original programming to other communities and expand the outreach of programming. During this tier, staff may request additional budget resources to inform the community of new programming as well as to create pilot programs of major City events such as the Culver City Music Festival, ArtWalk, and feature other department programs and messages such as Fire Safety, Sustainability and Redevelopment activities. It is proposed that this tier would be in effect for approximately 6-10 months.

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Tier III (24 - 36 months)

As CCTV 35 becomes more established and resources are available and allocated, staff will bring forward refined programming recommendations to the City Council for consideration that may include covering major events taking place throughout the City such as Little League Championships, events/programs from the Visual and Performing Arts Academy, and general news programming.

FISCAL ANALYSIS:

At this time, it is staff's recommendation to take a conservative approach in the enhancement of the GAC. Costs for implementation of the Tier I phase can be accommodated within the existing work plan and budget and would not require additional resources.

Given the current financial situation, it is possible progression to future tiers may be delayed due to the unavailability of financial and human resources necessary to fund the additional workplan items associated with Tier II and Tier III. In the case fiscal and/or human resources are not available, then operations of CCTV 35 will remain at Tier I.

ATTACHMENTS:

- 1) Programming Summaries from other municipalities
- 2) Proposed Resolution (including Draft Council Policy)
- 3) Sample Electronic Bulletin Board Slide
- 4) Available Municipal Programming

MOTION:

That the City Council:

- 1) Receive and file this report; and,
- 2) Adopt a Resolution establishing a City Council Policy Related to Operating Policies and Procedures for the City's Governmental Access Channel.