

DATE ISSUED: May 15, 2002

REPORT NO: 02-112

ATTENTION: Honorable Mayor and City Council

SUBJECT: Closed Captioning to be Included as Part of the City Council Meeting
Telecast

SUMMARY

THIS IS AN INFORMATION ITEM ONLY. NO ACTION IS REQUIRED ON THE PART OF THE CITY COUNCIL.

BACKGROUND

As part of its Fiscal Year 2002 budget deliberations, the City Council approved funding for the initiation of closed captioning as part of the televised coverage of Council meetings on the City's government access cable television channel. Closed captioning will assist viewers with hearing disabilities through the display of printed text similar to subtitles of the audio portion of the televised meeting on a television screen. Unlike subtitles, closed captioning is hidden as encoded data transmitted within the television signal. Viewers will be able to see the captioning through the use of a set-top captioning decoder or through decoders built into most television sets manufactured since 1993.

DISCUSSION

Closed captioning of the City Council telecast is set to begin with the May 20, 2002 meeting. Real-time closed captioning is being provided under contract by a professional captioning service (Rapidtext, Inc.) who provides captioning services to numerous programmers and public agencies around the country. The closed captioning service contract is being administered by the Cable Television Office of the Department of Information Technology and Communications.

The City's cable television channel, City TV 24, is seen on Cox Communications and Time Warner Cable Channel 24 within the municipal boundaries of the City of San Diego. Video

coverage of the City Council meetings is shown “live” and re-telecast that same evening at 7:00pm and on the weekends.

In the near future, the Cable TV Office, in conjunction with the City’s Disabilities Coordinator and the Corporate Sponsorships Program, will begin soliciting sponsorships for closed captioning services. Potential revenues from sponsors will be used to help provide closed captioning for Planning Commission and other public meeting telecasts as well as pre-produced video programming.

Respectfully submitted,

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Approved: Rey Arellano
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