



Agenda Information Sheet

File #: 19-145

Item #: 23.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY: Quality of Life
AGENDA DATE: February 13, 2019
COUNCIL DISTRICT(S): N/A
DEPARTMENT: Office of Cultural Affairs
EXECUTIVE: Joey Zapata

SUBJECT

A resolution rescinding Resolution No. 78-0309, previously approved on February 1, 1978, which provided for radio coverage of City Council meetings on WRR-FM, to discontinue City Council meeting broadcasts on WRR-FM - Estimated Annual Revenue: \$80,000.00 (see Fiscal Information for potential future costs)

BACKGROUND

WRR-FM Radio, a division of the Office of Cultural Affairs, has been broadcasting classical music since 1964. Out of 67 major stations in the Dallas-Fort Worth market, it is the only station broadcasting classical music. As an enterprise fund in the City's budget, WRR supports itself solely through the sale of advertising. The station has made significant improvements in ratings and listenership over the past four years by reducing the amount of talk on the station by:

- eliminating news and weather reports;
- training announcers to be concise and direct;
- cutting the number of commercial breaks in half; and
- eliminating all talk programs except paid programs on Saturday and Sunday mornings.

Even though the number of commercial breaks has been reduced, revenue has remained steady as the station has been able to raise its ad rates due to corresponding increases in listenership and ratings. To help continue this growth in listenership this action will discontinue City Council Agenda Meeting broadcasts which began in 1978 at the direction of the City Council.

Nielsen radio audience measurement data has shown that WRR's audience numbers decrease during the broadcast of City Council Agenda Meetings. During the May - July 2018 quarter, the WRR listening audience decreased by 82 percent during the broadcast, with the average quarter-hour audience (number of individuals tuned in per 15-minute period) dropping from approximately 10,600 to 1,900 listeners.

Public access to the City's open meetings has been enhanced in recent years. Dallas residents can view both live and archived City Council briefing, agenda and committee meetings, as well as board and commission meetings, online at DallasCityHall.com. Additionally, these meetings are also on Spectrum Channel 95, ATT U-verse Channel 99 and Verizon FIOS Channel 47.

Additionally, live-audio online streaming of open meetings was added to the City's website in January 2019 at the request of the Quality of Life, Arts and Culture Committee.

Freeing up the Wednesday blocks of programming will allow WRR to return to regular classical programming, which will lead to increased listenership, increased ratings, and finally, increased revenue for the station.

PRIOR ACTION/REVIEW (COUNCIL, BOARDS, COMMISSIONS)

Information about this item was provided to the Quality of Life, Arts and Culture Committee on November 26, 2018.

Information about this item was provided to the Quality of Life, Arts and Culture Committee on January 28, 2019.

FISCAL INFORMATION

Estimated Annual Revenue: \$80,000.00

Future Cost Consideration - The Quality of Life, Arts and Culture Committee also requested consideration of council meeting broadcasts on the WRR HD-2 channel. Staff estimates one-time capital costs of \$50,000.00 and annual operating costs of up to \$84,000.00 to enable HD-2 for this use. Staff proposes to consider this alternative during budget development for FY 2019-20.