

Memorandum



CITY OF DALLAS

DATE November 21, 2018

TO Honorable Members of the Quality of Life, Arts & Culture Committee: Sandy Greyson (Chair), Mark Clayton (Vice Chair), Rickey D. Callahan, Jennifer S. Gates, Scott Griggs, B. Adam McGough, Omar Narvaez

SUBJECT **City Council Agenda Meeting Broadcasts on WRR-FM**

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 D/FW 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 (see attached information) 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
- 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.

In order to help continue this growth in listenership, staff is requesting City Council action to discontinue the broadcasts of the two, regular City Council voting agenda meetings on Wednesdays each month. These broadcasts began in 1978 and were authorized by a City Council resolution.

Nielsen radio audience measurement data has shown that our audience numbers decrease during the broadcast of City Council agenda meetings. During the May-July 2018 quarter, the WRR listening audience decreased by 82% 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.

As you know, 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.

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. With the Committee's support, staff will prepare a resolution to rescind the 1978 City Council Resolution (78-0309).

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

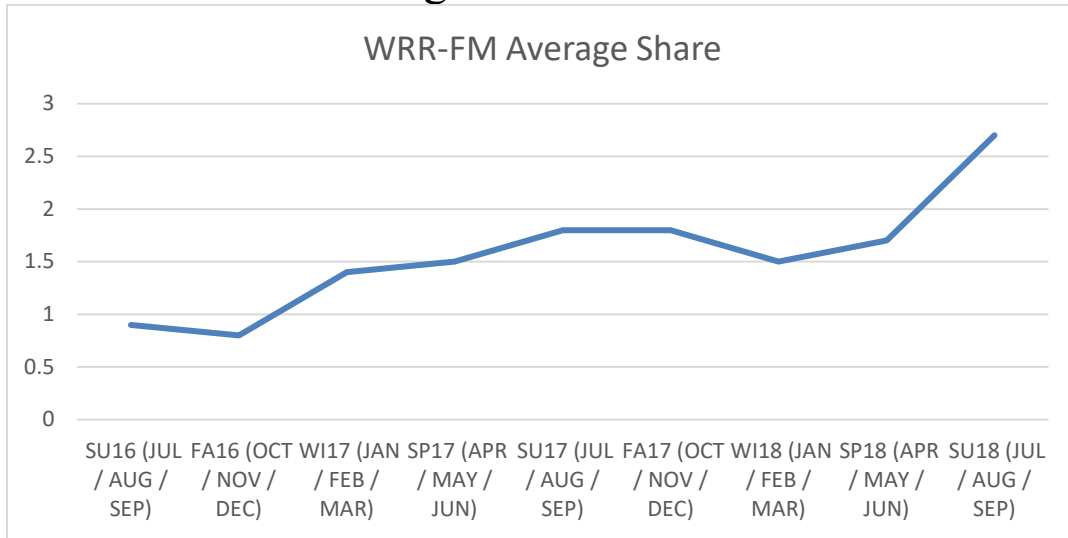
A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Joey Zapata".

Joey Zapata
Assistant City Manager

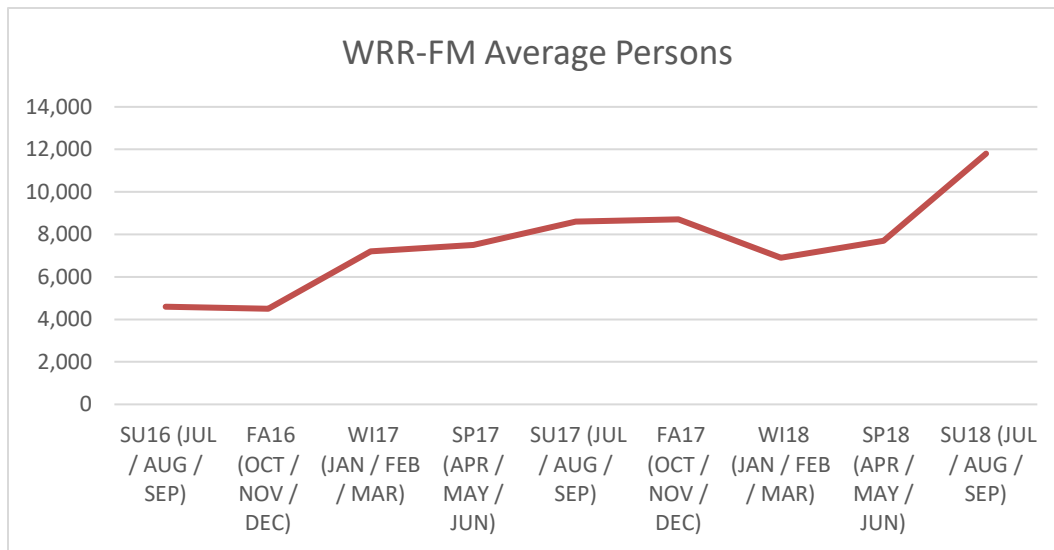
c: T.C. Broadnax, City Manager
Chris Caso, City Attorney (I)
Carol Smith, City Auditor (I)
Biliera Johnson, City Secretary
Preston Robinson, Administrative Judge
Kimberly Bizer Tolbert, Chief of Staff to the City Manager

Majed A. Al-Ghafry, Assistant City Manager
Jon Fortune, Assistant City Manager
Nadia Chandler Hardy, Assistant City Manager and Chief Resilience Officer
M. Elizabeth Reich, Chief Financial Officer
Directors and Assistant Directors

WRR Radio Ratings Trends Since Summer 2016

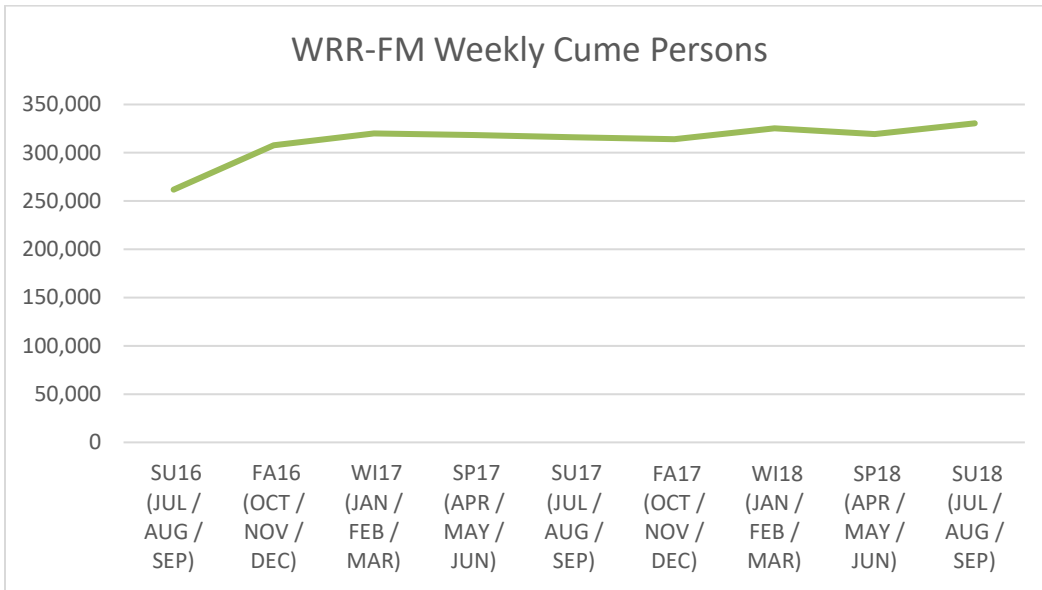


Average Share is the percentage of the overall D/FW market's (67 stations) listeners (e.g. 1%, 2.5%) that are tuning in to WRR.

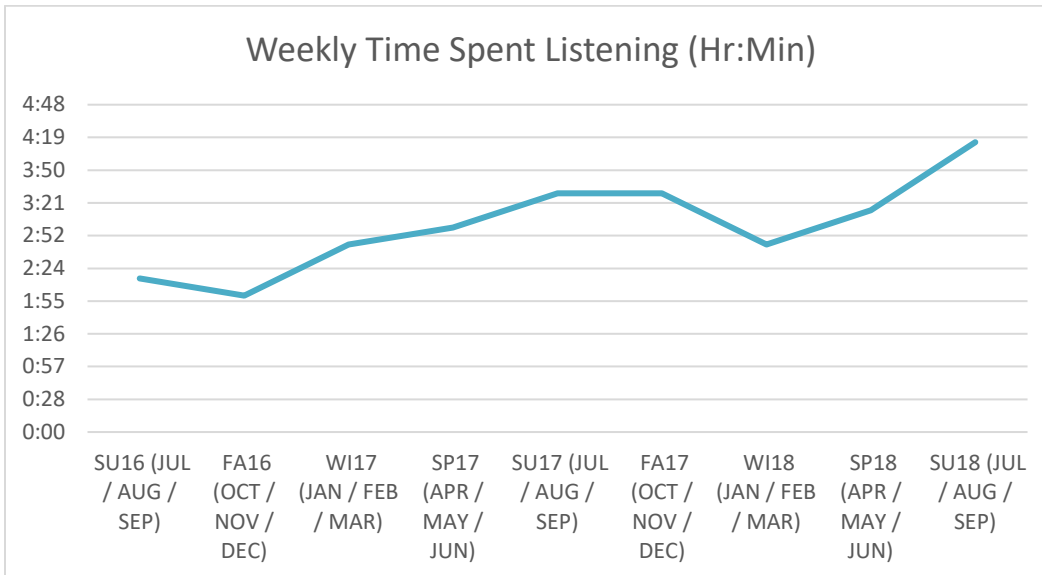


Average Persons is the average number of listeners in any one 15-minute segment. For example, in Summer 2018, nearly 12,000 listeners, on average, were listening during any 15-minute segment.

WRR Radio Ratings Trends Since Summer 2016 (cont.)



Weekly Cume is the total number of listeners that tune into the station for at least 15 minutes during the week.



Weekly Time Spent Listening is the average amount of time each listener spends listening to the station during the week.

OFFICIAL ACTION OF THE DALLAS CITY COUNCIL

February 1, 1978

78-0309

RADIO COVERAGE OF CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS

The matter of consideration of broadcasting city council meetings on municipal radio station WRR-FM was brought up for further discussion. (A motion made by Councilman Leedom at the January 25 meeting that the city council go on record as favoring WRR-FM carrying the city council meetings was tabled pending receipt of a report from the city manager. A report, council communication 20-8, was prepared by the city manager on January 26, 1978.)

Forrest W. Moore, 9616 Milltrail Drive, chairman of the municipal radio advisory board, appeared and urged the council to allow WRR-FM to continue its classical music format and not require the station to broadcast city council meetings.

Betty Svoboda, 3649 Townsend Drive, appeared to urge the council to broadcast the council meetings.

At the request of Mayor Folsom, Tom Grimes, an employee of KERA TV and KERA-FM, told the council that KERA-FM was broadcasting portions of the council meetings, and was interrupting their regularly scheduled broadcast to carry debates which the station considered of sufficient public interest, but that no plans to broadcast the council meetings gavel to gavel had been discussed.

Councilman Leedom then moved to take the matter off the table and call for a vote on the motion that the council go on record as favoring WRR-FM carrying the city council meetings and instructing the city manager to proceed with plans to implement the broadcast.

Mayor Pro Tem Blackburn moved to postpone any action for a period of ninety days and to instruct the city manager and the municipal radio advisory board to monitor the KERA-FM coverage of city council meetings and to give the city council a report.

ROLL CALL ON MAYOR PRO TEM BLACKBURN'S SUBSTITUTE MOTION:

Aye: Folsom, Blackburn, Hicks, Smith, Bartlett -5
Nay: Cothrum, Nicol, Leedom, Craft, Walton, Patterson -6

The mayor declared the motion failed.

OFFICIAL ACTION OF THE DALLAS CITY COUNCIL

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ROLL CALL ON COUNCILMAN LEEDOM'S ORIGINAL MOTION:

Aye: Cothrum, Nicol, Leedom, Craft, Walton, Patterson -6
Nay: Folsom, Blackburn, Hicks, Smith, Bartlett -5

The mayor declared the motion carried.



ROBERT S. SLOAN
City Secretary

RSS/gw

See also 78-0258