



# *CITY COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT*

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MEETING DATE: SEPT. 6, 2011

ITEM NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

**SUBJECT: REQUEST FROM KOCI RADIO FOR \$5,655 TO PURCHASE AND  
INSTALL EMERGENCY ALERT SYSTEM**

**DATE: AUG. 29, 2011**

**FROM: CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S OFFICE**

**PRESENTATION BY: BILL LOBDELL, INTERIM DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS**

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: BILL LOBDELL, (714) 754-5288**

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## **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the City Council approve a request by KOCI radio for \$5,655 to purchase an Emergency Alert System that will allow the Costa Mesa-based nonprofit community station to broadcast local, state and national emergency information quickly and automatically for the benefit of Costa Mesa residents.

## **BACKGROUND**

KOCI 101.5 FM, a nonprofit, is a new class of lower power FM radio station specifically licensed by the FCC to serve the Costa Mesa and Newport Beach communities. The station's signal also reaches nearby cities in central and coastal Orange County.

As a local broadcaster licensed by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), KOCI is legally required to have an Emergency Alert System that meets federal operational and performance standards. FCC regulations have recently required broadcasters to use a new type of Emergency Alert System, forcing KOCI to replace the existing unit at the station.

The Emergency Alert System is a national public warning system that allows the President of the United States to interrupt all broadcasts and address the country during times of a national emergency. The system also gives state and local authorities the capability to deliver alerts and other emergency information that can be targeted to specific communities.

The cost of buying and installing the new equipment is \$5,655 (see attached), which the nonprofit station cannot afford at this time. Its directors approached the City to see if a partnership could be formed that would be beneficial to both parties.

The new Emergency Alert System needs to be installed by Oct. 1, 2011 to meet the federal deadline.

## **ANALYSIS**

KOCI's Emergency Alert System would allow Costa Mesa residents—especially those in their cars, during strictly local emergencies or in blackouts—another communications channel to receive information.

As part of a new KOCI-City of Costa Mesa partnership, the City and radio station also would develop a regularly scheduled talk radio show that would feature Costa Mesa civic news and events, as well as public safety/emergency preparedness segment that would further both organizations' goal of public educational outreach.

As KOCI also serves the community of Newport Beach, City staff is working with KOCI to explore partial financial assistance from the City of Newport Beach on this request.

## **ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED**

Decline KOCI's request for \$5,655 to purchase a new Emergency Alert System.

## **FISCAL REVIEW**

The Emergency Alert System for KOCI would cost the City \$5,655 and provide Costa Mesa resident with a local media outlet to turn to during emergencies, in addition to providing redundancy. The City would receive \$6,000 worth of programming on the station to promote Costa Mesa news, events and emergency preparedness. Funding for this equipment would come from the funds budgeted in the General Fund Contingency Account.

## **LEGAL REVIEW**

No legal review is required at this time.

## **CONCLUSION**

It would be beneficial to Costa Mesa residents to have a local radio station equipped with an Emergency Alert System that can be accessed while driving and during blackouts and also provides information during local emergencies. The City of Costa Mesa would also benefit by having a talk radio show where information, news and events can be disseminated to the community.

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BILL LOBDELL  
Interim Director of Communications

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THOMAS HATCH  
Chief Executive Officer

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BOBBY YOUNG  
Director of Finance (fiscal review only)

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THOMAS P. DUARTE  
City Attorney (legal review only)

ATTACHMENTS: 1 [Emergency Alert System Cost Breakdown](#)

File Name

Date

Time