

Memorandum



DATE January 9, 2019

CITY OF DALLAS

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

At the November 26, 2018, Quality of Life, Arts and Culture meeting, staff recommended council action to rescind Resolution 78-3809, which authorized the broadcast of City Council agenda meetings on WRR Radio, a division of the Office of Cultural Affairs (OCA). The Committee requested that staff review and implement other options to preserve live audio broadcasts and information on the potential impact on late afternoon and early evening drive-time listenership due to City Council agenda meetings scheduled for afternoons/evenings in 2019.

The station's listenership, listener engagement and share of the D/FW market have more than doubled over the past two years due in large part to increased focus on programming and less talk on the air. However, recent Nielsen data showed an 80% decrease in listenership during broadcasts of agenda meetings on Wednesdays. WRR could further increase its listener growth, positive market position, and financial self-sustainability by discontinuing these broadcasts.

Listenership data suggests that broadcasting the meetings in the afternoon/evening time frame would lead to even larger reductions in listenership, with an expected drop from 15,600 to 1,900 (-88%), using data from the same quarter (May-July 2018). Afternoon and early evening time slots have been the biggest contributors to WRR's listenership growth over the past two years and ads are typically 100% sold.

Staff has implemented the Committee's request for live-audio online streaming of open meetings on the City's website. This augments the available live/archived video streaming and features live-audio for all open meetings that are being broadcast on the City's cable channels, including Council Committees and Boards/Commissions. Additionally, the existing archived-audio option will be further enhanced by April 2018 so that listeners can skip or select and listen to specific action/briefing items of a meeting.

The Committee also requested consideration of council meeting broadcasts on the WRR HD-2 channel. WRR currently broadcasts on 101.1 FM and HD1, and staff estimates one-time capital costs of \$50,000 and annual operating costs of up to \$84,000 to enable HD-2 for this use. Staff proposes to consider this alternative during budget development for FY19-20.

I will request the Committee's direction on January 14, 2019, in order to schedule action on the January 23rd Agenda to rescind City Council Resolution 78-3809. Please 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: Honorable Mayor and Members of City Council
T.C. Broadnax, City Manager
Chris Caso, City Attorney (I)
Carol Smith, City Auditor (I)
Bilierae 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