



# AGENDA REPORT

SAN CLEMENTE CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
Meeting Date: December 17, 2013

Agenda Item 9A

**Approvals:**

City Manager RS

Dept. Head ES

Attorney AS

Finance RV

**Department:** Finance & Administrative Services  
**Prepared By:** Erik Sund, Assistant City Manager

**Subject:** *QUARTERLY CITY MAGAZINE REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL*

**Fiscal Impact:** None. Sufficient budget is available in the Recreation Division's FY 2014 budget to cover the cost for printing services for the City Magazine for the current fiscal year.

**Summary:** Staff recommends the approval of in-house Recreation staff to design and produce the quarterly City Magazine and for Advanced Web Offset to print the City Magazine for a trial period of one year.

**Background:** Currently, the City Magazine is published quarterly by Community Service Network, Inc. (CSN), and contains City news, Recreation programs, events, community activities and advertisements. The design and printing costs are offset by the revenue collected by the current vendor through the sale of advertising. This results in a cost of \$31,000 annually to the City. CSN has done a great job collaborating with the City and creating a quality publication, but based on efficiencies with software and technology as well as website improvements, the City has an opportunity to improve this process.

At its April 15, 2008 meeting, the City Council approved a five year contract for Community Services Network to design and print the City Magazine. At the conclusion of this contract the City Council directed staff to conduct a Request for Proposal process for this service.

The City released a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the design and printing, design only, or printing only of the City Magazine to interested companies on September 5, 2013 with proposals received on October 7, 2013. Eight proposals were received. Based on their higher costs, three companies were eliminated. The other five were invited to interviews by an interview panel consisting of representatives from the City Manager's office, Recreation Division, and an outside city representative with magazine experience. The interviews included questions to determine if the proposer had met the selection criteria set forth in the RFP, which included work product, production schedule and staffing, production value, and firm qualifications and experience. The consensus evaluation by the interview panel selected the City's in-house proposal for design only of the City Magazine from the Recreation Division.

After thorough review by the panel, the print only options were determined to be high and staff was confident better pricing could be obtained through another quote process targeting appropriate printing vendors. The City solicited quotes from six

printers who publish City magazines from nearby cities. Four companies responded with quotes and came in considerably lower than the proposals received through the RFP process. The low quote for print only services was received from Advanced Web Offset at an annual amount of \$44,645, which was an estimated 25% less than the apparent low proposal for print only services obtained through the RFP process, which was for \$56,042 annually.

Based on submitted pricing via the RFP and quote process, using in-house design services along with Advanced Web Offset for printing will result in the City's costs being approximately \$18,000 lower annually than the lowest proposal submitted for design and print services.

**Discussion:**

**DESIGN SERVICES**

The City recommends the approval of in-house staff for the design of the City Magazine. This would create a substantial savings in magazine production time. Staff surveyed neighboring cities to determine their City Magazine production methods. Of the fifteen cities that responded, eleven designed their City Magazine with in-house resources. The estimated budgeted staff costs to provide these design services is \$4,900 as well as additional \$1,200 for software acquisition costs.

The in-house design proposal does not require additional staffing. Under the current contract for design services, staff generates all content, and reviews and edits the magazine several times before it is printed. With the proposed in-house design services, City staff could make the revisions directly. This would eliminate the back and forth coordination with an outside vendor that sometimes resulted in duplication of efforts and/or missed revisions, and reduce the production schedule by approximately two weeks. Additionally, the recent Recreation re-organization approved by the City Council enables a section of the Division to focus on publicity and marketing along with their other duties.

The proposed in-house design services include several improvements to the current magazine.

- *Technology:* The technology that has been proposed includes the ability to view the City Magazine on smart phones and tablets, generating a QR code printed on the magazine cover to link to the City website and registration, and link the online magazine to registration or other parts of the City website as appropriate.
- *Branding:* The ability to brand the City Magazine as a stand-out piece from other publications in San Clemente will help promote programs, events, news and other offerings by the City, and will give the City the ability to prioritize items of importance as needed. The branding will also be consistent with the new City website, flyers, City Facebook pages, and other means of promotion.
- *Streamlined Production:* By having the magazine produced in-house, the production timeline will be shortened by about two weeks (from 8 to 6 weeks).

- Eliminated or Reduced Advertising:* About half of the current City Magazine contains advertising. 33 pages (42%) of the current 79-page Winter 2014 issue is advertising. Staff has received complaints that the advertisers are not local to San Clemente and/or compete directly with the City programs offered in the magazine. It is staff's position that the inclusion of advertising makes the City Magazine appear to be a commercial publication rather than a news delivery system directly from the City. Staff recommends eliminating all advertising in order to differentiate the City Magazine from other commercial publications, and allow an improved layout of City information throughout. If advertising is desired by the City Council to offset printing costs, staff would recommend establishing an advertising policy that would limit advertisers to San Clemente businesses and establish a revised maximum number of advertising pages.

*PRINTING SERVICES*

As compared to the current model, the proposed recommended action will result in an increased cost, primarily through the printing cost that the City will directly fund. Staff recommends that Advanced Web Offset be selected to print the City Magazine at an annualized cost of \$44,645. Recreation's budget will be able to cover the printing costs incurred in FY14, however printing costs in future fiscal years may necessitate Recreation increasing their budget for printing only. The proposer currently prints the Dana Point City Magazine and comes highly recommended. The RFP specified a five year agreement; however, staff is recommending a one year trial term to evaluate the effectiveness of this strategy.

**Recommended**

**Action:** STAFF RECOMMENDS THAT the City Council 1) approve in-house staff to design the City Magazine; and 2) direct staff to draft an agreement with Advanced Web Offset for one year of printing services for the City Magazine.

**Notification:** Color Digital Printing and Mailing  
 Community Publications Network  
 Community Services Network  
 I Write Words  
 Jonathon Price Design  
 San Clemente Times  
 Synergy Direct Response  
 Advanced Web Offset

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