

Date: July 9, 2009



**TO: Board Members – Vancouver Park Board**  
**FROM: General Manager – Parks and Recreation**  
**SUBJECT: Board Meeting Audio / Video**

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## RECOMMENDATION

*THAT the Board post audio/video recordings of all Park Board meetings on the Park Board web site, including live streaming video for meetings at the administration building, commencing in 2010, subject to budget availability.*

## BACKGROUND

At the March 23, 2009 meeting, the Board passed the following motion:

THAT staff examine the feasibility of and report back on posting Board meeting proceedings on-line so as to allow public access to full audio recordings of these meetings.

## DISCUSSION

Park Board meetings take place regularly at 2099 Beach Avenue, but also at some off-site locations on a periodic basis. No audio or video of these meetings is currently being posted on the Park Board web site. Since 2004, City staff have been posting audio /video of Council meetings, live and archived, using a streaming video service.

Park Board meetings at the main administration office at 2099 Beach Avenue are currently being recorded from a single video camera mounted on the wall. Since audio and video are already captured in a single computer file, staff investigated options for extracting and posting audio only, or audio and video combined. However, staff found that the extra effort involved to extract the audio only from the file was not very beneficial as the audio file was still very large, and would be very cumbersome for the public to access. Therefore, staff investigated using a streaming video service similar to the one being used for City Council meetings.

The benefit of posting streaming video is that users can begin watching the video almost immediately, without having to wait for large volumes of data to download to their computer. In addition, the vendor providing the service for the City Council meetings offers a function whereby the archived video can be indexed to correspond to individual agenda items. This means the public would not have to search through the video of the entire meeting to find the item or items they are interested in.

The cost of providing this streaming video service for Park Board meetings would be \$2,000 for initial equipment setup and approximately \$13,000 per year.

In addition, staff investigated options for upgrading the existing camera mounted in the Board Room at 2099 Beach Avenue, as it is black and white only, with limited resolution.

The cost to upgrade to a color, higher resolution camera with pan, tilt and zoom features would be \$2,500.

Adding two more cameras would enable the recording to alternately focus on the current speaker or presenter. The cost to add two additional mounted cameras would be \$5,000. IT support staff at the meetings could select the active camera as appropriate.

### **Off-site Meetings**

Since 2003, the Park Board has held some off-site Community Board Meetings – on average 6 meetings per year. The audio-video setup and operation for these meetings is provided by a third party.

In order to capture and post audio/video of these off-site meetings, staff can purchase a camcorder, which can then be operated by the audio-visual company. The initial cost would be approximately \$1,000 and the cost for the operator would be \$125 per off-site meeting, or \$750 per year based on 6 off-site meetings.

The video for these meetings would not be streamed live, but would be posted on the Park Board web site the following day.

### **SUMMARY**

For an initial cost of \$11,000, plus an ongoing cost of \$14,000 per year, Park Board meetings could be streamed live on the internet, and archived for easy viewing by residents. This would provide the same level of service to residents as is currently being provided by City of Vancouver for Council meetings, as well as other municipalities and government bodies. Given the cost of providing this service, and the potential budget impacts as a result of the Vancouver Services Review, it is recommended that this initiative be considered for implementation in 2010, subject to budget availability.

Prepared by:

Corporate Services  
Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation  
Vancouver, BC  
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